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# Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

EXAMINING LEADERSHIP STYLES IN TEN HIGH POVERTY  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

BY

JOHN W. COOK

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 2011

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To embark on the journey of a dissertation is a bittersweet experience from beginning to end. Often time the light at the end of the tunnel appeared to be an on-coming train rather than the break of a new day. However, through perseverance and consistent support from family, friends, colleagues who became friends and my dissertation committee, the realization of the so-called train was nothing more than flashes of light that guided me toward completing my quest.

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study examines the construct of leadership styles as perceived by the principals and the teachers. The personal experiences of the participants, their perspectives, and their insights will be an important element of this researcher's inquiry and significant to understanding how leadership is perceived at 10 elementary schools with a high poverty student population.

The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
2. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that do not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
3. Does a type of leadership style exist among five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years that is different from the type of leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools

(kindergarten through eighth grade) that do not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?

This research study focuses on 10 elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois: five elementary schools that made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five elementary schools that did not made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years. As much as possible, schools with similar demographics constituted the sample for this study.

South suburban elementary schools were selected based on their SES profile and information gathered from their school report card regarding their AYP.

Low SES schools are determined by 50% or more of the student population receiving free or reduced lunch.

To ensure a degree of continuity, participating principals needed to be the principal in their present building level position for at least two consecutive years.

The principal and three teachers from each of the 10 schools were asked 11 open-ended questions designed to elicit information regarding perceived leadership styles and practices in their current school.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

On April 9, 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson as part of the war on poverty. Through a special funding known as Title I, monies were allocated to school districts to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

As ESEA stated, “This law provided financial assistance to local school districts serving areas with concentrations of children from low income families to expand and improve their educational programs by various means which contributed to meeting the special needs of educationally deprived children” (Section 2001, Elementary and Secondary School Act, 1965).

The assumption behind ESEA was more and better educational services for students from low socioeconomic status (SES) families would improve academic achievement and elevate the poor out of poverty.

Since its initial passage Congress has reauthorized ESEA several times. However, on January 8, 2002, ESEA evolved into the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) under President George W. Bush. In brief, NCLB’s purpose was to close the achievement gap with a focus on accountability, flexibility and choice, so no child would be left behind.

A major component of NCLB was the requirement that all schools would make

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on standardized state tests in all subgroups. If a Title I school does not meet AYP for two years as defined by NCLB in all areas, the school is placed in a school improvement cycle. When a Title I school is first placed in school improvement, the school must provide parents/guardian an opportunity to send their children to another school within the school district.

The NCLB legislation identifies the school principal as the instructional leader of the school and the person accountable for student achievement. Parents/guardians view the principal as the educational leader most responsible for ensuring the academic success of their children. The challenges of meeting the local school's needs, the mandates of the school district and the state policies began to take on Herculean proportions.

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory published a written summary in June, 2005 that provided insight into the changing role of the principal as he/she dealt with the accountability brought forth by the NCLB Act. The summary stated that "principals live in challenging times and are faced with leadership preparation and professional development that may not be fine tuned to NCLB requirements" (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory [NREL], 2005, p. 2).

Prior to the passage of NCLB, the demand for accountability for student achievement in the United States gained considerable momentum with the publication in 1983 of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform Report* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). The essence of the report is best described in the following statement:

All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, completely guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interest but also the progress of society itself. (p. 1)

Although the Commission focused primarily on high school students, the aforementioned statement is clear in its' meaning that all students can learn. The Commission provided a list of five recommendations that are as follows:

1. Content - State and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened and at minimum, all students seeking a diploma be required by law foundations in the Five New Basics by taking the following curriculum during their years of high school: a) four years of English; b) three years of mathematics; c) three years of science; d) three years of social studies; e) one-half year of computer science. For the college-bound, two years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier.
2. Standards and Expectations - Schools, colleges and universities adopt more rigorous and measurable standards, and higher expectations for academic performance and student conduct, and that four-year colleges and universities raise their requirements for admission. This will help students to do their best educationally with challenging material in an environment that supports learning and authentic accomplishment.
3. Time - Significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day, or a lengthened school year.

4. Teaching - Each of the seven parts (not listed here) is intended to improve the preparation of teachers to make teaching a more rewarding and respected profession. Each part stands on its own and should not be considered solely as an implementing recommendation.
5. Leadership and Fiscal - Citizens across the nation hold educators and elected officials responsible for providing the leadership necessary to achieve these reforms, and that citizens provide the fiscal support and stability required to bring about the reforms.

All of the Commission's recommendations are crucial to education, but only recommendations numbers 2 – Standards and Expectations and 5 – Leadership and Fiscal will assist in pursuing the purpose of this research study. The fiscal aspect of recommendation number 5 will not be the point of focus of this study. Instead, an examination of the perceived leadership styles that exist in low SES schools and how perceived leadership styles impact on meeting present-day standards and expectations established by the federal, state and local mandates are the focus.

Findings in a study by Hallinger and Murphy (1983) suggest a community's socioeconomic status makes a difference in the behavior of instructional leaders. Accordingly, principals in high income school districts work mostly in the background to meet the high expectations shared by parents and teachers alike, whereas principals in low SES school districts took on a more active role in cultivating high expectations and counterbalancing lack of support or encouragement from the students' home environment. This study suggests a contrast of the leadership in low SES school districts and leadership in high SES school districts.

An overriding set of generalizations can be drawn from the findings: (1) effective instructional leaders set high expectation and reinforce these expectations through daily interactions with staff and students; (2) effective instructional leaders are responsive to the socioeconomic context of their communities; and (3) such leaders cultivate norms of collegiality and mutual trust among their teachers.

Banks (2001) indicated that concentrated school poverty has negative effects on students, teachers, and the school, and the effect of concentrated poverty also extends beyond the effect of the individual student condition. In addition to high teacher turnover, high-poverty schools must struggle with the challenges posed by a student body facing health care, proper nutrition, violence and unstable home environments (Orfield & Lee 2005).

In a report by Banks (1999), two key findings contribute to the field of research. First, students' achievement showed marked declines when the school poverty concentration rose above 40% (Lippman, Burns & McArthur, 1996); and, having an above-average proportion of free or reduced price lunch students increases the likelihood of a school not meeting growth targets established by state formulas by 27% (Johnson & Ward, 1998). Research also indicates that higher poverty schools are more likely to have less experienced teachers than low poverty schools (Clotfeler, Ladd, Vigdor, & Wheeler, 2006).

Rumberger and Palardy (2005) report the high levels of poverty can interfere with a school's ability to successfully improve student achievement. The correlates of poverty that their research associates with poor academic achievement include: poor nutrition,



inadequate health services, and high rates of illiteracy and criminal behavior, which can result in high rates of student transience, absence and disciplinary problems.

Research by Edmonds (cited in Sweeney, 1982) examined the role and significance of leadership in improving students' academic achievement. "Schools and school leadership do make a difference. There are tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools attributable to leadership" (p. 348).

Leithwood and Riehl (2005) found that even in the most challenging school contexts, effective leaders exhibit four core practices that are necessary, but insufficient for success: (1) setting directions that secure the physical environment and achieve high academic standards, (2) developing people to use effective instructional strategies and interventions, (3) redesigning the organization to include teachers and parents in decision-making, and (4) managing the curriculum effectively by staffing the school with teachers who align with the mission and direction and buffering them from distractions. In order to set direction, leaders develop and communicate shared goals, a sense of common purpose, and high performance expectations (Marsh, 2002; Petrides & Guiney, 2002). In challenging schools, this requires that achievable goals be set.

Effective leaders offer their teachers intellectual stimulation and individualized support (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005). Literature in the U.S. depicts principals as strong leaders whose expert knowledge of curriculum and instructional practices serve as the "pedagogical lighthouse" for the school.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) created the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards in 1996. The six ISLLC

Standards were amended in 2007 and adopted in 2008 in at least 40 states. The purpose of the ISLLC Standards is to provide a framework for what is considered effective behavior for educational leadership (see Figure 1).

**Standard 1:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

**Standard 2:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

**Standard 3:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

**Standard 4:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

**Standard 5:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

**Standard 6:** An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Note: Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC1 2008 as adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration on December 12, 2007.

Figure 1. Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards

Joseph Murphy (2005) provided that the profession (school principal) was experiencing major changes and that those changes were needed if the profession was to prosper. In the 2005 article written by Murphy in *Educational Administrative Quarterly*, he introduced the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders as “arguably the most significant reshaping initiative afoot in the profession” (Murphy, 2005, p. 154).

According to Lashway (2001), “the principal is the point person in responding to the community concerns and at the same time proactively tells the school’s story” (p. 13).

Educational researchers have continually identified the principal as an essential force in school reform efforts (Elmore 2000; Fullan 2000); according to Leithwood and Jantzi (1999), the school principal can account for about 20% of a school’s impact on student achievement. Research, such as this, suggests an increasing need to study principals in the transformation of school structures, cultures and student achievement.

Waters et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of numerous available studies that examined the relationship between leadership and student achievement since the early 1970s. The findings revealed a substantial relationship between school leadership and student achievement and identified 21 specific leadership practices that are significantly correlated with student achievement.

Regarding the importance of the school leader is also given credence by Blankstein (2004) in his study which states that “The most effective school leaders are able to collaborate create and sustain changes that continually enhance student achievement” (p. 194). He describes the effective leader as one who creates a culture of success, provides support and resources and has a vision of long-term sustainability. Reeves (2007a) states, “Meaningful school improvement begins with cultural change, and cultural change begins with the school leadership” (p. 94).

### **Purpose of Study**

This study will examine the leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is to determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress is not achieved overall for three consecutive years.

### **Significance of Study**

It is hoped by this researcher that this study will provide insight into the leadership characteristics of principals in identified elementary schools that have low socioeconomic status. More specifically, it is hoped that the schools that have achieved AYP and the schools that have not made AYP will provide pertinent information about effective leadership characteristics that will guide other practitioners who are in the role of educational leaders. Additionally, educational leadership programs stand to benefit from having a better understanding of effective and ineffective leadership characteristics in low socioeconomic schools. Educational leadership programs may use this study to improve and/or revise their curriculum to better prepare aspiring principals for their role

as educational leader. Finally, superintendents and school boards could regard this study as being useful in helping to determine necessary leadership characteristics when considering the hiring or retention of a principal.

### **Statement of Problem**

In the past eight years the American public has witnessed the bankruptcy of Enron in 2001, WorldCom in 2002 and Arthur Anderson in 2008. In September, 2008, American International Group (AIG) requested and received a financial bailout from the government to the tune of 85 billion dollars. Federal de-regulations have caused if not encouraged foreclosures, massive layoffs, company acquisitions and the financial bailout of companies that were previously perceived as “staples.” Is it possible that greedy, dishonest, hypocritical, self-serving leadership coupled with a lack of accountability and oversight has contributed to an economy so severe that General Motors, Ford and Chrysler has considered merging in order to remain solvent? A newspaper article written by Krisher (2008) indicated that Senator Sherrod Brown from Ohio was among lawmakers worried that an industry collapse would be devastating for everything from school districts to small businesses.

Ultimately, the responsibility of managing, supervising or coordinating an organization or public office depends on the abilities, skills and characteristics of its leadership.

In the book, *Good-to-Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't*, Collins (2001) and a team of researchers analyzed data gathered from 28 companies over a five-year period to ascertain the key characteristics of the companies

who sustained success. The sample in the research study consisted of 11 good-to-great companies, 11 direct comparison companies, and six un-sustained comparison companies. Companies considered as good-to-great companies had to have sustained cumulative stock returns that beat the market by an average of seven times in 15 years. These companies were compared with comparison companies that failed to make the leap from good to great. Also, and perhaps more importantly, the good-to-great companies were compared with each other to discover what did the good-to-great companies share in common that differentiated them from the comparison companies.

The question being asked was “Why do some companies make the leap from good-to-great and other comparison companies linger in mediocrity? This question set the stage for examining company histories, reviewing documents and conducting a multitude of interviews, all of which were aimed at providing information that could shed light on company characteristics that impacted their sustained success over the 15 year period.

According to Collins (2001), organizations that maintained forward momentum and consistency had at its helm a Level 5 leader. Level 5 leaders are described as having personal humility and professional will. Level 5 leaders subjugate their egos in favor of the organization. Level 5 leaders look in the mirror when things go bad and they look out the window when things are successful. In a nutshell, these leaders blame themselves rather than others when the organization makes a mis-step and they give credit to the employees when the organization is achieving.

A by-product of Collins (2001, p. 20) research resulted in the development of a five tier leadership model that is illustrated in Figure 2.

<b>LEVEL 5</b>	<b>LEVEL 5 EXECUTIVE</b> Builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.
<b>LEVEL 4</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE LEADER</b> Catalyzes commitment to a vigorous pursuit of a clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards.
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>COMPETENT MANAGER</b> Organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of pre-determined objectives.
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>CONTRIBUTING TEAM MEMBER</b> Contributes individual capabilities to the achievement of group objectives and works effectively with others in a group setting.
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>HIGHLY CAPABLE INDIVIDUAL</b> Makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills, and good work habits.

Figure 2. Five-Tier Leadership Model

Sergiovanni (2001) identifies five sources of authority that constitute leadership styles and characteristics: (1) bureaucratic authority – top-down management that adheres to mandates, rules, regulations, job descriptions and expectations with little to no room for subordinate input; (2) psychological authority – a practice of leadership that relies on quid pro quo, “do this for me and I’ll do that for you”; (3) technical-rational authority – a form of leadership that relies heavily on evidence based on logic and scientific research; (4) professional authority – a practice of leadership based on the high expectations and expertise of the subordinate who responds to intrinsic motivation to fulfill professional

obligations; and (5) moral authority – a leadership style grounded in shared values and ideals that contribute to commitments and interdependence among all employees.

Amid budget cuts and depleted resources and personnel, some schools continue to make academic achievement according to the guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). How is this possible when a number of said schools are also in low SES areas? Collins (2001) points out those schools with very similar demographics can often have very different outcomes regarding student achievement. He credits the difference in outcomes to the type of leadership on board at the schools.

Many factors have been established that need to be in place in order for public education to prosper; however, if the institution of public education survives, many experts believe that it will depend heavily upon the role of the school principal. Fullan (2001, 2002) found in his research that the principal is instrumental in the success and failure of a public school. Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, and Orr (2007) stated:

Tremendous expectations have been placed on school leaders to cure the ills facing the nation's schools. The critical part principals play in developing successful schools has been well established by researchers over the last two decades: committed leaders who understand instruction and can develop the capacities of teachers and of schools are key to improving educational outcomes for all students (p. 1).



### **Research Questions**

1. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
2. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that do not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
3. Does a type of leadership style exist among five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years that is different from the type of leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that do not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?

### **Research Design**

The research design best suited for this study is a qualitative method. This approach allows this researcher to focus on the construct of *leadership style* as perceived and interpreted by the school principals and select teachers. Open-ended questions are used during the interview to examine leadership styles as perceived by the participants. The research will generate a narrative report that is transcribed directly from the oral responses of the research participants.

This research study will focus on 10 elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois: five elementary schools that have

made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five elementary schools that have not made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years. As much as possible, schools with similar demographics will constitute the sample for this study. The principals and three teachers from each of the 10 schools will be asked 11 open-ended questions designed to elicit information regarding perceived leadership styles and practices in their current school.

The questions will allow for spontaneity, but also allow for redirection when responses are not aligned with the questions or the intent of the study.

The use of a tape recorder will be used for purposes of consistency of participant responses. A transcriber will be utilized for the purpose of transferring the oral responses into written language.

Due to the overwhelming overlap of leadership styles, four categories are provided according to their similarities. An examination of emerging patterns of leadership style will be coded to determine possible alignment with the leadership styles listed in the four Leadership Styles: Style A; Style B; Style C; and Style D.

### **Style A**

Autocratic leaders closely monitors the teacher and the teacher's performance; fosters competition between staff; rewards success and punishes poor performance. The autocratic leader is also directive and task-oriented (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939).

Bureaucratic leaders advocate a strong division between management (thinkers) and labor (doers). There is a clear delineation of authority. Also, workers need to be directed (Taylor, 1911).

Bureaucratic leaders view teachers as subordinates in a hierarchically arranged system. Hierarchy equals expertise and trustworthiness. Teachers are not to be trusted and the goals and interests of teachers and supervisors are not the same. These leaders closely monitor teachers to ensure compliance (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Level 3 leaders organize people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of pre-determined objectives (Collins, 2001).

### **Style B**

Transactional leaders exchange things of value with subordinates to advance their own and their subordinates' agendas (Kuhnert, 1994).

Transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates to do what the leaders wants (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Psychological leaders barter with teachers so each side gets what it wants. Teachers comply with requirements and rules when rewards are available. When the teachers' needs are met, the work gets done (Sergiovanni, 1992).

### **Style C**

Transformational leaders are concerned with improving the performance of followers and developing followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990a).

Transformational leaders exhibit a strong set of internal values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Kuhnert, 1994).

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great organization. These leaders are ambitious first and foremost for the institution, not themselves. These leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not charisma to motivate. Lastly, these leaders demonstrate an unwavering resolve to do whatever is necessary to produce the best long-term results (Collins, 2001).

Moral leaders identify and make explicit the values and beliefs that define the center of school as a community. These leaders promote collegiality and rely on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations. There is also a reliance on the school community's informal norms to enforce professional and community values (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Servant leaders subjugate their egoistic needs to the greater ambition of building something larger and more lasting than themselves (Collins, 2001).

Servant leaders refer to those who bring a leader moral distinction of conscious sacrificial service to meet the needs of individual followers (Greenleaf, 1977).

### **Style D**

Situational leaders maintain that managers use different leadership styles depending on the situation. Depending on the employees' competencies in their task areas and commitment to their tasks, the leadership style should vary from one person to another (Hersey & Blanchard, 1968).

Contingency leadership is based on the personality of the leader and the degree of stability or uncertainty of the situation (Fiedler, 1967; 1974).

These four categories of leadership will be utilized due to their similarities and great overlap of leadership styles.

The participants will be informed that their identity will be kept confidential and the tape recordings and transcriptions will be deleted and destroyed two years after the research has been completed.

1. Consent Forms: Consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researchers' home. They will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.
2. Field Notes: Field Notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. They will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.
3. Audio Recordings: Audio recordings will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. They will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.
4. Transcribed Audio Recordings: Transcribed audio recordings will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. They will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.

Additionally, all participants will be provided with written letters of cooperation to participate in this research and written informed consent letters to participate in this research study.

### **Limitations of Study**

This research study is subject to a number of limitations beyond the control of the researcher and the limited scope of the sample. Listed are the following limitations:

1. The participants in the sample are limited to 10 principals and 30 teachers employed in public elementary schools in the south suburban areas of Chicago, Illinois.
2. The summary and conclusions drawn from the study cannot be generalized to other elementary schools.
3. There are no public secondary schools (high schools) included in the study.
4. This study does not include a comparison and contrast of leadership styles at schools that are not low SES schools.
5. Variables other than leadership styles also contribute to academic achievement or lack of it.

### **Biases of Researcher**

1. The researcher has personally witnessed administrative biases toward students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. The researcher has been discouraged by administration from working in collaboration with teachers to improve the academic achievement of students.
3. The researcher has been discouraged by administration from seeking the input of teachers regarding decision-making.

The researcher will maintain a journal of questions, concerns, new information, contradictions and personal reflections. The journal will be shared on an on-going basis

with the dissertation director in order to ensure the researcher has kept his personal bias from coloring the data collection, analysis and conclusions.

As a reminder, the researcher will keep in mind the following five significant points made by Gilovich (1991) to help maintain researcher objectivity.

1. Our personal experiences tend to override information to the contrary, no matter how persuasive they may be.
2. We have a tendency to make up our minds on insufficient evidence.
3. We are more than likely to seek out and notice information that confirms what we already believe.
4. We are also likely to overlook or downgrade information that contradicts what we already believe.
5. We tend to be less critical of information that supports our pre-existing beliefs and more critical of information that challenges them.

### **Definition of Terms**

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - the standard set forth by NCLB which determines academic achievement of individual public schools throughout the United States.

AIMSweb - a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention.

Convenient Sampling - a non-random technique for choosing research participants who are easy to reach; convenient availability as the name implies.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) - a federal law enacted in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson to provide federal funds to school districts that serve students from low income families.

Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) - measures individual student achievement relative to the Illinois Learning Standards. The results give parents, teachers, and schools one measure of student learning and school performance.

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) - a set of six educational policy standards and specific functions for educational leaders that help to define effective school leadership.

Low Socioeconomic Status (SES) - where 50% or more of the student population receives free and reduced lunch; high poverty status.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) - a federal law enacted in 2002 by President George W. Bush pertaining to public education with the following criteria:

- hold schools accountable for results
- give states and school districts flexibility in how they spend federal money
- use scientific research to inform classroom practice
- involve parents by giving them information and choices about their children's education

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) - a strategy for improving student academic and behavior outcomes by ensuring all students have access to the most



effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible.

Professional Learning Community - a school environment where school staff focuses on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and holds itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement (DuFour, 2004).

Response to intervention (RTI) - integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

Success for All (SFA) - is a whole-school reform model that includes a reading, writing, and oral language development program for students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Classroom reading instruction is delivered in daily 90-minute blocks to students grouped by reading ability. Immediate intervention with tutors who are certified teachers is given each day to those students who are having difficulty reading at the same level as their classmates.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

In reviewing the literature there is an abundance of leadership theories and their attendant styles and practices. Clearly, there is considerable overlap in terms of their styles and practices. The leadership practices of the 10 elementary school principals in this research sample are examined in terms of their alignment with the styles referred to as Style A, B, C or D. Leadership styles that exhibit similar characteristics are grouped under the umbrella of Categories of Leadership referred to as Style A, B, C or D.

Harris (2007) states that the school leadership field is particularly susceptible to new leadership terms that are temporarily popular, only to be quickly supplemented with more fashionable ideas or theories. The field is replete with different labels for leadership, even though it is clear that leadership does not take on a different meaning simply because a new word is put in front of it. In fact, Goethals, Sorensen and Burns (2004) list and describe in detail 16 different styles of leadership.

It is important at this point to identify some of the leadership theories that are the foundations for many of the leadership styles that are currently being practiced.

## **Leadership Theories**

The term leadership is used often in regular discourse. However, despite its frequent usage and popularity, it does not have a standardized definition. Bass (1990) has lamented the taxonomic confusion by suggesting that “there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p. 11).

It would appear that virtually all definitions of leadership share a common thread; leadership involves leading or influencing others, which would suggest the presence or existence of followers. One cannot lead when no one is following. To that end, leadership is concerned with how the leader affects or influences followers.

Foster (1986) stated “Leadership, in the final analysis, is the ability of humans to relate deeply to each other in the search for a more perfect union. Leadership is a consensual task, a sharing of ideas and a sharing of responsibilities, where a leader is a leader for a moment only, where the leadership exerted must be validated by the consent of followers, and where leadership lies in the struggles of a community to find meaning for itself.”

The definition of leadership selected for purposes of this research study is succinctly described as follows: Leadership is the ability to influence followers toward the achievement of a common goal.

## **Bureaucratic Leadership**

Frederick Taylor was considered the father of scientific management. Taylor (1911) advocated a bureaucratic leadership philosophy that emphasized top-down management. Taylor believed that there should be a clear delineation between labor (workers) and management (supervisors). Labor represents the doers and management represents the thinkers. Sergiovanni (1992) added to the field by stating that bureaucratic leaders do not trust subordinates and the goals and interests of teachers and leaders are not the same. He further pointed out that bureaucratic leaders must closely monitor subordinates to carry-out their duties because subordinates lack the expertise and trustworthiness found in leaders. This is consistent with Lewin, Lippitt, and White (1939) who state that autocratic (bureaucratic) leaders closely monitors the worker and the worker's performance; rewards success and punishes poor performance; and the autocratic leader is directive and task-oriented.

Two examples of school leaders with bureaucratic leadership styles are Joe Clark and Michelle Rhee.

In 1982, a former Army Reserve sergeant, Joe Clark, became principal of Eastside High School in Paterson, New Jersey. Eastside High School had a student population of 3,200, mostly black and Hispanic, with a third of the families on public assistance. Amid graffiti, drugs, violence, high drop-out rate and poor test scores, chaos had been the norm prior to the appointment of Joe Clark.

Joe Clark was reported to have removed 300 students from school in a single day without due process. Hundreds more students were also removed along with teachers and

other staff. Simpson (1988) wrote that Joe Clark was quoted as saying “In this building everything emanates and ultimates from me. Nothing happens without me” (p. 52).

The New Jersey’s governor declared Eastside High School a model school in 1984, and in 1986 Joe Clark was named one of the nation’s 10 Principals of Leadership.

Michelle Rhee became chancellor of Washington D.C.’s school district’s 123 Schools in June 2007. Within a year Rhee dismissed 270 teachers, 36 principals, 100 central office staff and closed 21 schools.

According to Ripley (2008), Rhee was quoted to have said “Have I rubbed some people the wrong way? Definitely. If I changed my style, I might make people more comfortable. But I think there’s a real danger in acting in a way that makes adults feel better. Because where does it stop?” (p. 40).

While some have praised Michelle Rhee as having courage and determination, others pointed out that hierarchical, top-down models of management does not work.

Both Joe Clark and Michelle Rhee’s leadership styles have garnered mixed reviews from all levels of education and government.

### **Transactional Leadership**

James MacGregor Burns (1978) proposed that leadership is inseparable from followers’ needs and the goals and is a result of the interaction between the leaders and followers. Burns examined what he believed to be two basic forms of leader-follower interaction: (a) transactional and (b) transformational. Transactional leadership involves influencing followers through an exchange of something valued by both the leader and

follower. The concept of *quid pro quo* is applicable here because it refers to doing something for someone in exchange for receiving something back in return.

Additionally, Burns (1978) described the most common form of leadership found between leaders and followers as transactional, a term previously used by Downton (1973), when he contrasted transformational leadership with transactional rebel leaders. Bass (1985), Burns (1978) and Hollander (1978) agreed that reinforcement theory formed the basis of transactional leadership which involved a social exchange between leader and follower. The leader has some transaction in mind when working with the follower toward a goal that has an extrinsic reward. The actual reward serves as motivation to achieve the desired outcome.

Sergiovanni's (1992) psychological source of authority has similar elements as the transactional leadership model but also state the goals and interests of teachers and supervisors are not the same but can be bartered for so that each side can receive what it wants. Also, teachers have needs that get met at work and as a result, the work gets done as expected. However, when the rewards are not provided in either model, transactional leadership or psychological authority, the performance of the teacher decreases due to the lack of the reward incentive. The assumption underlying both of these types of leadership is those teachers will respond to rewards provided for desired behaviors.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership involves an engagement between leaders and followers bound by common purpose, where "leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978).

Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio (1994) defined the effects of transformational leadership as stimulating others to view their work from new perspectives; knowing the organization's mission or vision; developing other's abilities to higher levels of performance; and motivating others beyond self-interests toward the benefit of the group or organization. Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers (Robbins & Judge, 2005).

Avolio and Bass (1988) identify four important dimensions to transformational leadership. The first dimension is the concept that idealized influence represents the sharing of risk and burden by the leaders, with the follower and the leader both having consideration for the personal needs of followers. The second dimension is inspirational motivation, characterized by behaviors that seek to create meaningful and challenging work for the followers. The third dimension achieves intellectual stimulation by the leader requesting ideas and urging collaborative problem solving. The fourth dimension focuses upon individualized consideration by the leaders attempting to promote the personal development of the follower (Smith, Montagno & Kuzmenko, 2004). Feinberg, Ostroff and Burke (2005) state that transformational leadership is essentially leadership that motivates followers to transcend their self-interest for the collective purpose, vision, and mission (p. 471).

### **Professional Authority and Moral Authority**

In examining professional authority and moral authority, Sergiovanni (1992) points out that professional authority is based on assisting, supporting and providing professional development; there is dialogue regarding professional practice; peer accountability is encouraged; and teachers comply with professional standards and norms. Moral authority is based on explicit values and beliefs; collegiality is promoted; and teachers conform to community values.

The assumptions of a leadership style based on professional authority consist of teaching as situational and contextual and accepting professional knowledge based on one's experience. The assumption underlying the leadership style of moral authority is schools are viewed as professional learning communities with shared values and beliefs.

### **Situational Leadership**

In considering the concept of situational leadership, Hersey and Blanchard (1968) maintain that managers use different leadership styles depending on the situation. Depending on the employees' competencies in their task areas and commitment to their tasks, the leadership style should vary from one person to another. The matrix (see Figure 3) illustrates how Hersey and Blanchard characterized leadership style regarding the amount of direction and support a leader is supposed to provide for his or her followers based on the followers' competencies for the task at hand.

Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2001) defined task behavior as the extent to which the leader engages in spelling out the duties and responsibilities of an individual or



group. Also, the leader behavior involves communication with the followers as well as interpersonal interactions such as supporting and/or facilitating.

<b>Low Directive and High Supportive Behavior</b>  <b>PARTICIPATING/ SUPPORTING</b>  <i>S3</i>	<b>High Directive and High Supportive Behavior</b>  <b>SELLING/ COACHING</b>  <i>S2</i>
<b>Low Directive and Low Supportive Behavior</b>  <b>DELEGATING</b>  <i>S4</i>	<b>High Directive and Low Supportive Behavior</b>  <b>TELLING/ DIRECTING</b>  <i>S1</i>

Note: Retrieved from ([http://www.12manage.com/methods\\_blanchard\\_situational\\_leadership.html](http://www.12manage.com/methods_blanchard_situational_leadership.html)).

Figure 3. Managerial Grid

Blanchard, Hersey and Johnson (2001) explain how the amount of direction and support is determined for followers in each of the quadrants in the matrix.

Quadrant S1 – Telling/Directing is indicative of a leadership style that is announced, so communication is largely one-way. This is for followers who lack

competence but are enthusiastic and committed. However, they need direction and supervision to get them started.

Quadrant S2 – Selling/Coaching leaders define roles and tasks, but seek ideas and suggestions from the follower. Communication is two-way and followers have some competence but lack commitment. Both support and praise are needed to build self-confidence, and involvement in decision-making helps restore their commitment.

Quadrant S3 – Participating/Supporting leaders pass day-to-day decisions to the follower. The leader serves to facilitate and take part in decisions, but control is with the follower. These followers have competence, but lack confidence. Their skill level is high, but support is necessary to encourage confidence and motivation.

Quadrant S4 – Delegating refers to leaders who allow followers to exercise control in problem-solving and decision making. These followers can work on a project themselves, without supervision or support due to their high level of competence and commitment.

Assumptions that arise from the situational leadership model are leaders should base their leadership style on the abilities and commitment of the follower. It is also assumed that the leadership style should match one of the four levels of readiness and willingness of the follower. Together, both of the aforementioned statements suggest the best course of action by the leader is based on the situational variable.

## **Contingency Leadership**

A leadership style known as the contingency leadership model was advanced by Fred Fiedler. Fiedler's (1967, 1974) contingency model of leadership is based on the personality of the leader and the degree of stability or uncertainty of the situation. Fiedler developed three factors that he considered instrumental in determining the situation: (1) leader-member relations – the extent to which there is a relationship between the leader and the follower; (2) task structure – the nature of the task to be performed; and (3) position power – the role of the leader's power as perceived by the follower. The focus here is on the particular variables related to the environment that might determine which particular style of leadership is best suited for the situation. This theory assumes no one leadership style is best in all situations. The success or effectiveness of this type of leadership depends upon variables, including leadership styles, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation.

## **Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership, as reported by Keith (2008), was initially advanced by Robert Greenleaf in an essay that was published in 1970. In his essay, Greenleaf stated:

The servant-leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous,

more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived? (p. 9)

Keith (2008) stated that servant-leaders are set apart from other leaders in that they are focused on others, not just themselves, and they are motivated to make life better for others, not just themselves. This difference in focus and motivation is what really distinguishes servant-leaders, regardless of their titles, roles, or positions. Examples of servant-leaders in history include Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale, Susan B. Anthony, Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Albert Schweitzer and Harriet Tubman (p. 12).

Sergiovanni (1992) pointed out that there is a link between servant leadership and the earlier mentioned concept of moral leadership. At the root of persuasion are ideas, values, substance, and content, which together define group purposes and core values. Servant leadership is practiced by serving others, but its ultimate purpose is to place oneself and others for whom one has responsibility in the service of ideals.

Blanchard and Hodges (2005) stated that one aspect of a job well done as a servant is how well we have prepared others to carry on after our season of leadership influence is completed. Our leadership legacy is not just limited to what we accomplished, but it includes what we leave behind in the hearts and minds of those with whom we had a chance to teach and work.

Maxwell (2007) also gives credence to the legacy of succession. He indicated that leaders who leave a legacy of succession lead the organization with a long view, create a leadership culture, pay the price today to assure success tomorrow, value team

leadership above individual leadership, and walk away from the organization with integrity.

Level 5 leaders, according to Collins (2001), channel ambition into the organization, not the self; sets up successors for even greater success in the next generation. The level 5 leader demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long-term results, no matter how difficult. These leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not inspiring charisma, to motivate.

Bass (2000) offered a distinction between servant leadership and transformational leadership by pointing out that despite common similarities, servant leadership goes beyond transformational leadership in selecting the needs of others as its highest priority, that to serve others is the leaders' main aim, whereas transformational leaders strive to align their own and others' interest with the good of the group, organization or society.

Russell and Stone (2002) suggested that servant leaders gain influence in a nontraditional manner through servanthood. Stone et al. (2002) stated, "Anecdotal evidence suggests that transformational leaders rely more on their charismatic attributes to influence followers, whereas servant leaders significantly influence followers through service itself" (p. 355).

### **Categories of Leadership**

Due to the overwhelming overlap of leadership styles, four categories are provided according to their similarities.

**Style A.** Autocratic leaders closely monitors the teacher and the teacher's performance; fosters competition between staff; rewards success and punishes poor

performance. The autocratic leader is also directive and task-oriented (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939).

Bureaucratic leaders advocate a strong division between management (thinkers) and labor (doers). There is a clear delineation of authority. Also, workers need to be directed (Taylor, 1911).

Bureaucratic leaders view teachers as subordinates in a hierarchically arranged system. Hierarchy equals expertise and trustworthiness. Teachers are not to be trusted and the goals and interests of teachers and supervisors are not the same. These leaders closely monitor teachers to ensure compliance (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Level 3 leaders organize people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of pre-determined objectives (Collins, 2001).

**Style B.** Transactional leaders exchange things of value with subordinates to advance their own and their subordinates' agendas (Kuhnert, 1994).

Transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates to do what the leaders wants (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Psychological leaders barter with teachers so each side gets what it wants. Teachers comply with requirements and rules when rewards are available. When the teachers' needs are met, the work gets done (Sergiovanni, 1992).

**Style C.** Transformational leaders are concerned with improving the performance of followers and developing followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990a).

Transformational leaders exhibit a strong set of internal values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Kuhnert, 1994).

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great organization. These leaders are ambitious first and foremost for the institution, not themselves. These leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not charisma to motivate. Lastly, these leaders demonstrate an unwavering resolve to do whatever is necessary to produce the best long-term results (Collins, 2001).

Moral leaders identify and make explicit the values and beliefs that define the center of school as a community. These leaders promote collegiality and rely on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations. There is also a reliance on the school community's informal norms to enforce professional and community values (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Servant leaders subjugate their egoistic needs to the greater ambition of building something larger and more lasting than themselves (Collins, 2001).

Servant leaders refer to those who bring a leader moral distinction of conscious sacrificial service to meet the needs of individual followers (Greenleaf, 1977).

**Style D.** Situational leaders maintain that managers use different leadership styles depending on the situation. Depending on the employees' competencies in their task areas and commitment to their tasks, the leadership style should vary from one person to another (Hersey & Blanchard, 1968).

Contingency leadership is based on the personality of the leader and the degree of stability or uncertainty of the situation (Fiedler, 1967; 1974).

### **Leadership and Student Achievement**

Public school systems and individual schools are experiencing mounting demands and pressure for high-quality instruction and universal student achievement. The increased attention and calls for greater action geared toward student success is attributed in large part to recent accountability reform efforts. More often than not, the brunt of the burden for school improvement, and to meet accreditation standards, falls squarely on the shoulders of the building leader – the principal (Tirozzi, 2001).

Within the USA, “standards-based accountability swept through the country during the late 1980s and 1990s with profound force, in a more concerted and coordinated effort than earlier reforms” (Fuhrman & Elmore, 2004). At the national level, the most recent evolution of the standards-based accountability movement has resulted in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2002, and more commonly referred to as NCLB (Duke, Grogan, Tucker, & Heinecke, 2003). NCLB aims to improve and promote achievement for all students utilizing research-based best practices (Daresh, 2006; Kimmelman, 2006). Each year schools and school systems must pass 35 benchmarks, most tied directly to state standardized tests, to retain federal accreditation. And, each year, accreditation standards increase, requiring educational agencies to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (Daresh, 2006). If one sub-group does not meet AYP, the school is not accredited (Kimmelman, 2006). Schools



failing to meet AYP benchmarks face financial sanctions and the possibility of being reconstituted (Daresh, 2006; Kimmelman, 2006).

The role of the school leader is complex (Parkes & Thomas, 2007) and the focus on principals as leaders for teaching and learning within the schools and their responsibility for increased student achievement has risen with recent reform efforts (Fink & Resnick, 2001; McAdams, 1998). But, leadership practices vary from school to school and narrowing down those key factors is difficult. In fact, “Unraveling the effects of principals and instructional leadership is a complicated, if not impossible business” (Sherman & Crum, 2007).

Leadership is thought critical to innovation in schools. We know that schools matter when it comes to improving student learning and we know a considerable amount about the organizational structures, leadership roles, and conditions of schools that contribute to innovation (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Newman & Wehlage 1995).

We know, for example that schools with shared visions and norms around instruction, norms of collaboration, and a sense of collective responsibility for students’ academic success create incentives and opportunities for teachers to improve their practice (Bryk & Driscoll 1985, Newman & Wehlage 1995). We know that principals’ leadership is important in promoting these conditions (Rosenholtz 1989). Furthermore, there is considerable evidence to suggest that principals’ leadership, as mediated through the development of these school-level conditions and processes, has an effect on student learning (Hallinger & Heck 1996).

According to the earlier mentioned meta-analysis study conducted by Waters et al. (2003), the three most effective leadership practices that were identified are (a) situational awareness (the principal is aware of details and undercurrents in running the school and uses information to address current and potential problems); (b) intellectual stimulation (the principal ensures that faculty and staff are made aware of the most current theories and practices and incorporates discussion of these as aspects of school culture); and (c) input (teachers are involved in the design and implementation of important decisions).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) emphasize that “Collaboration is the critical competency for achieving and sustaining high performance” (p. 242). In educational environments, administrators and staff need to ensure that students are achieving academically. It takes a collaborative effort with the staff to develop the vision, set goals, plan and deliver instruction, and evaluate the process continuously. This view for attaining and sustaining academic success strongly suggests that effective leadership is a function of the interaction between the principal, staff, students and the parent community.

Robinson et al. (2008) determined that leadership involves the determined pursuit of clear goals, which are understood by and attractive to those who pursue them. Goal setting is a powerful leadership tool in the quest for improving valued student outcomes because it signals to staff that even though everything is important, some activities and outcomes are more important than others. Without clear goals, staff effort and initiatives can be dissipated in multiple agendas and conflicting priorities, which, over time, can

produce burnout, cynicism and disengagement. Because the agenda for teacher professional learning is endless, goal setting should play an important part in determining the teacher learning agenda. Leaders' involvement in teacher learning provides them with a deep understanding of the conditions required to enable staff to make and sustain the changes required for improved outcomes. Additionally, leadership that ensures an orderly environment makes it possible for staff to teach and students to learn. Protection of teaching time from administrative and student disruption is one critical aspect of this dimension. Another is creating classroom and playground environments in which both staff and students feel respected and personally cared for.

Consistent with Robinson (2008), Love (2005) states that the constant nourishing of individuals is at the core of effective leadership. Effective leaders improve performance by assuming a level of competence and building upon existing strengths.

Like parenting, leaders know human development involves creating opportunities for competencies to be acquired. Emphasis on competence, caring and self-esteem are all important to successful leadership.

Scheerens and Bosker (1997) point out that there are no consistent results for the relationship between educational leadership and pupil achievement. Hallinger and Heck (1996) and Witziers, Bosker, and Kruger (2003), state that this can be due to conceptual and methodological choices. However, Hallinger and Heck (1996) also state that, "The effects of principal leadership will occur indirectly through the principal's efforts to influence those who come into more frequent contact with students" (p. 24). This

suggests that the principal plays an important role in forming the basis for effective instructional programs which in turn increase student achievement.

According to Bossert, Dsyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982), an indirect effect, through the way in which the school is organized and the pedagogical and educational climate, seem more plausible. Pitner (1988) and Hallinger and Heck (1996, 1998) described five conceptual models for the relationship between leadership and achievement:

1. The direct model assumes a direct relationship between school leaders' practice and student achievement. Moreover, this model assumes that these effects can be measured in a valid way, keeping all other possible variables constant.
2. The direct effect model with antecedents is a variant model in which effects of the context on leadership and achievement are assumed. A context factor often used is the mean socioeconomic status of the school population. Its effect is not seen as an interaction effect between leadership and achievement.
3. The indirect effect model assumes that the effect of the school leadership goes through intermediate variables, such as the organization of the school and the school climate.
4. The indirect effect model with antecedents extends the previous model with context factors that have an influence on leadership by a school leader. In this model, leadership is seen both as a function of the context and as a factor influencing achievement through the organization and climate of the school.
5. The recursive effect model assumes that the relations between the school leadership, intermediate variables, and achievement are interactive. This model departs from the

assumption that leaders adapt their behavior to the organization in which they work, and that their ideas and practices can change during time.

A concern generated by the effect models seems to ask which intermediate variables of school leadership can influence student achievement. In their review, Hallinger and Heck (1998) organize the results according to four domains, based on the theoretical models Leithwood (1994) and Ogawa and Bossert (1995): (1) vision and goal setting, (2) organizational structure and social networks, (3) human capital, and (4) organizational culture. The most consistent findings are found for the first domain: vision development and coherent goals (Hallinger, 2003); Witziers et al., 2003). These studies provide evidence of the impact that the school leaders play in facilitating consensus regarding the goals, mission and vision of the school.

Danielson (2002) indicates that school leadership requires the capability to develop, communicate, and put in place a vision for school improvement that marshals the energies of disparate members of a staff around common goals. Visionary leadership enables staff members to regard the most mundane aspects of their roles in light of their relation to prompting student learning. Although largely considered the province of the administration, leadership may be exercised by anyone in the school: true leaders can include teachers, or even the school secretary.

The importance of having a vision that is shared by all stakeholders has considerable impact on the successful and sustained achievement of students. Scheurich's (1998) research determined that "successful schools and their leadership do not just have a strong vision; they have a particular vision, driven by their passionate

commitment to their belief that there are ways to do schooling so that literally all children do well” (p. 468).

Mendez-Morse (1991) point out that “principals have a vision - a picture of what they want students to achieve. They engage teachers, parents, students and others to share in creating the vision. They encourage them to join in the efforts to make that vision a reality. They keep the vision in the forefront” (p. 2).

A meta-analysis of research that examined the features of leadership associated with student achievement suggests that the ISLLC standards may under-emphasize some features of effective leadership practices. These include the ways in which leaders directly participate in curriculum design and implementation; support and promote effective instructional and student assessment practices; recognize individual and school accomplishments; and adapt their leadership to address the context-specific needs of teachers, students, and other stakeholders (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005, p. 6).

One research study conducted with the Dallas Independent School District determined “that the quickest way to change the effectiveness of a school, for better or worse, is to change the principal” (Mendro, 1998, pp.263-264).

Cotton (2003) points out that “Principals of effective schools respect their teachers’ skills and judgment, and allow them considerable autonomy in organizing and managing their classrooms. They also protect staff members from excessive intrusion by forces outside the school” (pp.70-71).

Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) conducted a study on the impact of leadership on student achievement. A dimensional analysis yielded five areas that were deemed relevant to support effective leadership. *Dimension 1*: Establishing goals and expectations to include setting, communicating, and monitoring of learning goals, standards, and expectations, and the involvement of staff and others in the process so that there is clarity and consensus about goals; *Dimension 2*: Strategic resourcing involves aligning resource selection and allocation to priority teaching goals. It also includes provision of appropriate expertise through staff recruitment; *Dimension 3*: Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum with direct involvement in the support and evaluation of teaching through regular classroom visits and provision of formative and summative feedback to teachers as well as direct oversight of curriculum through schoolwide coordination across classes and year levels and alignment to school goals; *Dimension 4*: Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development that not only promotes but directly participates with teachers in formal or informal professional learning; and *Dimension 5*: Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment by protecting time for teaching and learning by reducing external pressures and interruptions and establishing an orderly and supportive environment both inside and outside classrooms.

Robinson et al. (2008) conclude “The leadership dimension that is most strongly associated with positive student outcomes is that of promoting and participating in teacher learning and development. Because the agenda for teacher professional learning is endless, goal setting should play an important part in determining the teacher learning

agenda. Leaders' involvement in teacher learning provides them with a deep understanding of the conditions required to enable staff to make and sustain the changes required for improved outcomes. It is the responsibility of leaders at all levels of the system to create those conditions" (p. 667).

### **Student Achievement and Socioeconomic Status**

Since the late 1960s, a variety of federal, state, and local programs have been designed and implemented in an effort to offset the profound difficulties children from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds encounter when they enter our public schools. Many of these programs prepare preschool children of low socioeconomic status (SES) for the challenges they face as they begin their education. Other programs seek to improve the achievement levels of low-SES students who are already struggling in schools that lack the resources to provide them with the special attention they need for success (Renchler, 1993).

Low achievement is closely correlated with lack of resources, and numerous studies have documented the correlation between low socioeconomic status and low achievement (Hodgkinson, 1995). Miller (1995) argued that students from low-income homes tend to do less well in school than students from high-income. Both statements seem to suggest the need for increased opportunities and resource allocation for students of low-income status.

Research has provided evidence that poverty is associated with increased levels of parental stress, depression, and poor health – conditions which might adversely affect parents' ability to nurture their children. For example, in 1998, 27% of kindergartners



living in poverty had a parent at risk for depression, compared to 14 for other kindergartners (Child Trends and Center for Child Health Research (2004). Low-income parents also report a higher level of frustration and aggravation with their children, and these children are more likely to have poor verbal development and exhibit higher levels of distractibility and hostility in the classroom (Parker et. al, 1999).

In predicting levels of student achievement, family incomes continue to be reliable indicators. Students who live in poverty are not only more likely to underachieve than their peers from middle and high-income households; they are also at risk of not completing school. During the last 25 years, the drop-out rate for economically disadvantaged students has declined, but it still remains substantially higher than for students from wealthier backgrounds. Students who are living in poverty are more likely to be retained, suspended, and expelled from school (Woods, 2003).

Jonathan Kozol (1991) indicated that the denial of the means of competition is perhaps the single most consistent outcome of the education offered to poor children in the schools of our large cities. In effect, a circular phenomenon evolves: “the richer districts – those in which property lots and houses are more highly valued – have more revenue, derived from taxing land and homes, to fund their public schools. The reputation of the schools, in turn, expands the tax base for their public schools” (p. 121).

More recently, according to Kozol (2005), regardless of the provision of resources for public schooling, children are expected to perform at national standards, and are graded on what are, in fact, no less than national exams that measure their success or failure.

Students who grow up in households with incomes below the poverty line are not simply more likely to dropout; they are also more likely to earn less money during their lifetimes. An estimated 40% of inmates in state prisons today are high school dropouts (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000). Their children, in turn, faced with limited resources and often attending poor quality schools, are at an increased risk of not succeeding academically and of repeating the cycle (Arnold & Doctoroff, 2003). Educators who have high expectations of all their students can make an enormous difference (Carter, 2000; Esquith, 2003; Haycock, 2004; Lyman & Villani, 2004).

High standards, excellent teaching, and strong leadership characterize the high-poverty schools which have been academically successful. The educators who work in such schools share goals for student learning and a sense of community (Lyman & Villani, 2004; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000). In some cases, their students have scored higher on standardized tests than students attending schools in middle and high-income neighborhoods (Haycock, 2004; The Education Trust, 1999).

In a report submitted by Carter (1999) to The Heritage Foundation, seven urban elementary schools across the United States where 75% or more of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch were able to demonstrate high academic achievement. The report described seven common elements that were shared among the principals of the high performing schools: (1) principals must be free; (2) principals use measurable goals to establish a culture of achievement; (3) master teachers bring out the best in faculty; (4) rigorous and regular testing leads to continuous student achievement; (5) achievement is

the key to discipline; (6) principals work actively with parents to make the home a center of learning; and (7) effort creates ability.

A subsequent report by Carter (2000) on 21 urban elementary schools provided evidence that the previously mentioned seven common elements are complimented with five additional elements: (1) effective allocation of funds; (2) emphasis on basic skills; (3) effective diagnostic testing; (4) teacher quality; and (5) parental accountability.

In a case study conducted by Horst and Martin (2007) on the impact of leadership on achievement of students from poverty in a rural setting, similar leadership practices as previously mentioned were cited. Observations by the researchers revealed the principal focused on the school's vision of continuous student achievement and high expectations for herself, her staff and the students. Having high expectations to effectively work with students from poverty were needed according to Payne (2005). Collaboration among staff impacted professional growth was advanced through Pod meetings which was made up by all the middle school teachers. As each teacher led a Pod, empowerment (Bolman & Deal, 2002) was generated to conduct meetings and share information. Each Pod could brainstorm to solve problems and to develop more effective teaching strategies (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Additionally, collaboration among the community was encouraged by having the parents eat with lunch with their children and visit their classes. Community members attended school events and the board of education and the superintendent shared an understanding of their specific roles, and each took the responsibility for assuming those roles.

In a report titled Learning from Nine High Poverty, High Achieving Blue Ribbon

Schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2006), it was stated that leadership may be the single most powerful characteristic of Blue Ribbon Schools. Each of the nine schools profiled in the report bear the stamp of committed, often visionary leaders who have created pathways for their successors as they transformed their schools.

It appears that principals of high-achieving schools in low-income areas are at the forefront of leading school improvement. These effective principals require teachers to be accountable for effective instructional strategies and practices that yield continuous improvement. Leadership is shared through collaboration and communication with all teachers. The culture of the school environment is one that all students not only can learn, but do, in fact learn. This high expectation of staff and students lays the foundation for student success. Also, these principals are aware of the needs of staff, and students, and by assessing these needs and implementing appropriate professional development for teachers and effective instructional practices that benefit students, these schools in low-income areas have been reported as being academically successful.

Stigler and Hiebert (1999) explain that teachers who use their knowledge to solve school problems collaboratively tend to be particularly satisfied with and committed to their jobs. Reflection, dialogue, and inquiry can enhance teachers' collaborative efforts by helping them identify and resolve common challenges. Teachers who work collaboratively with peers, administrators, parents, and community members are better able to transform practice and thereby improve both their professional practice and student learning.

Principals should provide continuous visible support and reorganize school resources such as time, staff, and money to enable learning by all (Mizell, 1994; Wilson & Colbert, 1999; Wohlester, Mohrman & Robertson, 1997).

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

In an attempt to examine leadership styles and characteristics at 10 high poverty elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade): five schools that have made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five schools that have not made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years, it is apparent the main school-based characters responsible for facilitating student achievement are the teachers and the principal. Donaldson (2009) reports that the principal who continues to learn with and from teachers is sending a double message: “I value my role as an instructional leader, and I value you as my colleagues in this central endeavor.” This central endeavor seems to imply all students, regardless of socio-economic status, require the development of literacy skills that is the mandate of teachers and principals.

In a study by Parrett and Budge (2009), on high performing/high poverty schools, a consistent message resounded; a school can overcome the powerful and pervasive effects of poverty on a student’s learning. Sustained improvement usually began with an individual or a small group of leaders committed to equity and the goal of successfully teaching every student.

Providing principals and teachers with an opportunity to share their perceptions of leadership styles at their schools will serve to increase understanding of the impact leadership has in schools with a high poverty student population.

According to Johnson and Christensen (2004), a qualitative method for gathering data will allow for detailed expressions of perceptions that numerical data found in quantitative research does not describe. Quantitative research is often privileged as “hard” science. A quantitative researcher relies on numbers, rates, and percentages typically presented in a table, grid, or chart in order to communicate meaning (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p. 1). Additionally, most quantitative data techniques are data condensers. They condense data in order to see the big picture. Qualitative methods, by contrast, are best understood as data enhancers. When data are enhanced, it is possible to see key aspects of cases more clearly (Ragin, 1994, p. 92, as quoted by Neuman, 1997, pp. 14-15).

According to Waterhouse (2007), qualitative research is aimed at learning about and understanding people’s lived realities and the social settings of people’s lives. Researchers studying people in social settings have the task of understanding very complex dynamics and this necessarily involves considering the nature of life, how it is seen and how it can be known. Qualitative inquiry is method, process and representation.

In the summer and fall of 2007, Public Agenda (2008) completed five focus groups with principals in high-needs districts and 16 one-on-one qualitative interviews with superintendents and other high-ranking education officials including a state superintendent of education. All the principals held leadership positions supervising

schools where more than half of students received free or reduced lunch. All interviews followed a systematic interview guide revolving around two broad questions: What makes an effective leader in a high-needs school, and how can we attract, train, retain and support more effective leaders of this kind?

This qualitative research study examined the construct of leadership styles as perceived by the principals and the teachers. The personal experiences of the participants, their perspectives, and their insights is an important element of this researcher's inquiry and significant to understanding how leadership is perceived at 10 elementary schools with a high poverty student population.

### **Research Design**

The research design selected for this study is a qualitative method. This approach allowed the researcher to focus on the construct of *leadership style* as perceived and interpreted by the school principals and select teachers. Open-ended questions were used during the individual interviews to examine leadership styles as perceived by the participants. This research study generated a narrative report that was transcribed directly from the oral responses of the research participants.

This research study focused on 10 elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois: five elementary schools that made adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five elementary schools that did not made adequate yearly progress for three consecutive years. As much as possible, schools with similar demographics constituted the sample for this study. The principals and three teachers from each of the 10 schools were asked 11 similar open-



ended questions designed to elicit information regarding perceived leadership styles and practices in their current school. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), being explicit about processes and collecting comparable data on them not only avoids costly distractions but also foster comparability and give the researcher easier access to the core underlying constructs.

The questions allowed for spontaneity, but also allowed for redirection when responses are not aligned with the questions or the intent of the study. As Wolcott (1982) puts it, there is merit in open-mindedness and willingness to enter a research setting looking for questions as well as answers, but it is “impossible to embark upon research without some idea of what one is looking for and foolish not to make that quest explicit” (p. 157).

### **Sample Selection**

The site selection of the south suburban elementary schools began by reviewing the *Southtown* Newspaper’s annual report on school districts in the south suburbs of Chicago that met AYP and school districts that did not met AYP as determined by the standards set forth by NCLB. Secondly, the site selection process included accessing and reviewing the school districts’ website to ascertain which of their respective schools met the criteria for consideration of inclusion in this research study.

South suburban elementary schools were selected based on their SES profile and information gathered from their school report card regarding their AYP. A total of 10 elementary low SES schools were examined; five schools that achieved adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years and five schools that did not achieve

adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years. Low SES schools were determined by 50% or more of the student population receiving free or reduced lunch.

To ensure a degree of continuity, participating principals needed to be the principal in their present building level position for at least two consecutive years. The letter of recruitment to participate in the research specifies the two consecutive year requirement necessary to participate in the research study.

A total of 10 school district superintendents were mailed letters of cooperation requesting their permission for this researcher to solicit principals and teachers in their respective school districts. Three superintendents responded favorably and subsequently signed the Letter of Cooperation which was scanned, downloaded onto the letterhead of their school district and emailed to this researcher.

At least 30 elementary school principals were invited by Letter of Recruitment to participate in the research study to ensure the target number of ten schools for the research study. The first five principals of schools who achieved AYP and responded positively to the Letter of Recruitment and the first five principals of schools that did not achieve AYP that respond positively to the Letter of Recruitment were selected to participate in the research study. The 10 principals also received a Letter of Informed Consent to review prior to participation in the research study. Those not selected either by choice or inability to respond to the Letter of Recruitment in a timely manner were thanked for their interest and notified by letter that they would not be included in the research study. Additionally, the Letters of Recruitment and the Letters of Informed Consent were hand-delivered to all of the intended principal participants.

Upon acceptance of the principals to participate, all teachers in the respective elementary school received a Letter of Recruitment to participate in this study and a Letter of Informed Consent to review prior to participation in this research study. The first three teachers from each school who responded positively to the Letter of Recruitment were selected to participate in the research study. Those not selected either by choice or inability to respond to the letter of consent in a timely manner were thanked for their interest and notified by letter that they would not be included in the research study.

It is important to state that each principal allowed this researcher to meet with his/her staff of teachers at a convenient time to briefly discuss the details of this research study and distribute the Letters of Recruitment and the Letters of Informed Consent.

The principal at each of the 10 schools was interviewed using the 11 open-ended questions to ascertain data regarding their perceived leadership style. Three teachers from each of the 10 schools were also interviewed to answer 11 open-ended questions to ascertain their perception of their respective principal's leadership style.

All participants were required to sign the Letter of Informed Consent in my presence prior to their participation in this research study and were informed they were free to withdraw from this research at any time without any penalties. My contact information was included on the Letter of Recruitment and the Letter of Informed Consent.

### **Data Collection**

The instruments used to gather data was a set of 11 open-ended questions. The questions for the principals and teachers generated information regarding the perception of leadership styles of each principal as determined by the principal and respective three teachers for each school.

The researcher interviewed each individual participant utilizing each of the 11 questions from the respective interview protocol. All participants were allowed to preview the interview questions prior to the interview. To ensure accuracy and consistency, the use of an audio tape recorder was used to record each participant's response. By utilizing a member check, each participant was allowed to listen to their own audio recording and make the necessary amendments or omissions. Only three of the 40 participants chose to make amendments that were later transcribed according to their requested changes. Member checking provided clarification of and insight into the participants' responses and assisted in facilitating descriptive validity.

Interviews were conducted at a time and location that was mutually convenient for the researcher and the participants. Locations were both quiet and private in order to maximize confidentiality and audio transmission. Principal participants were typically interviewed in their office and teacher participants were interviewed at a local public library of their choice.

A transcriber was utilized for the purpose of transferring the verbatim oral responses into written language.

All participants, prior to participation received written notification of the data collection process, an audio recorder to be used, and a transcriber who will transfer the collected data. Additionally, all participants were informed that all collected data, recordings and transcriptions would be destroyed after two years following completion of the final analysis. The individual identities of participants, their schools and school districts would be anonymous.

Each school, principal and teacher is identified solely by the following demographic criteria.

#### **Demographics of Schools**

- student population
- diversity of population
- number of classrooms per grade level
- grade level of school
- percent of poverty level

#### **Characteristics of Principals**

- age
- gender
- level of education
- length of time as a principal
- length of time as a principal at current school

### **Characteristics of Teachers**

- age
- gender
- level of education
- length of time as a teacher
- length of time as a teacher at current school

### **Data Analysis**

An examination of emerging patterns of leadership style is coded to determine possible alignment with the leadership styles listed in the section, Leadership Styles: Style A; Style B; Style C; and Style D.

#### **Style A**

Autocratic leaders closely monitors the teacher and the teacher's performance; fosters competition between staff; rewards success and punishes poor performance. The autocratic leader is also directive and task-oriented (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939).

Bureaucratic leaders advocate a strong division between management (thinkers) and labor (doers). There is a clear delineation of authority. Also, workers need to be directed (Taylor, 1911).

Bureaucratic leaders view teachers as subordinates in a hierarchically arranged system. Hierarchy equals expertise and trustworthiness. Teachers are not to be trusted and the goals and interests of teachers and supervisors are not the same. These leaders closely monitor teachers to ensure compliance (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Level 3 leaders organize people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of pre-determined objectives (Collins, 2001).

### **Style B**

Transactional leaders exchange things of value with subordinates to advance their own and their subordinates' agendas (Kuhnert, 1994).

Transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates to do what the leaders wants (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Psychological leaders barter with teachers so each side gets what it wants. Teachers comply with requirements and rules when rewards are available. When the teachers' needs are met, the work gets done (Sergiovanni, 1992).

### **Style C**

Transformational leaders are concerned with improving the performance of followers and developing followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990a).

Transformational leaders exhibit a strong set of internal values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Kuhnert, 1994).

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great organization. These leaders are ambitious first and foremost for the institution, not themselves. These leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not charisma to motivate. Lastly, these leaders demonstrate an unwavering resolve to do whatever is necessary to produce the best long-term results (Collins, 2001).

Moral leaders identify and make explicit the values and beliefs that define the center of school as a community. These leaders promote collegiality and rely on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations. There is also a reliance on the school community's informal norms to enforce professional and community values (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Servant leaders subjugate their egoistic needs to the greater ambition of building something larger and more lasting than themselves (Collins, 2001).

Servant leaders refer to those who bring a leader moral distinction of conscious sacrificial service to meet the needs of individual followers (Greenleaf, 1977).

### **Style D**

Situational leaders maintain that managers use different leadership styles depending on the situation. Depending on the employees' competencies in their task areas and commitment to their tasks, the leadership style should vary from one person to another (Hersey & Blanchard, 1968).

Contingency leadership is based on the personality of the leader and the degree of stability or uncertainty of the situation (Fiedler, 1967; 1974).

Consistent with the qualitative approach to data analysis, the information gathered was examined according to similarities and contrasts and placed into appropriate categories that reflect a commonality. Although not exhaustive, these listed styles of leadership are commonly practiced throughout educational settings. Due to the tremendous amount of overlap of leadership styles the terms used may indicate a difference only in words but not in actual practice.



### **Limitations of Study**

This research study is subject to a number of limitations beyond the control of the researcher and the limited scope of the sample. Listed are the following limitations:

1. The participants in the sample are limited to ten principals and thirty teachers employed in public elementary schools in the south suburban areas of Chicago, Illinois.
2. The summary and conclusions drawn from the study cannot be generalized to other elementary schools.
3. There are no public secondary schools (high schools) included in the study.
4. This study does not include a comparison and contrast of leadership styles at schools that are not low SES schools.
5. Variables other than leadership styles also contribute to academic achievement or lack of it.

### **Biases of Researcher**

1. The researcher has personally witnessed administrative biases toward students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. The researcher has been discouraged by administration from working in collaboration with teachers to improve the academic achievement of students.
3. The researcher has been discouraged by administration from seeking the input of teachers regarding decision-making.

The researcher has maintained a journal of questions, concerns, new information, contradictions and personal reflections. The journal has been shared on an on-going basis

with the dissertation director in order to ensure the researcher has kept his personal bias from coloring the data collection, analysis and conclusions.

As a reminder, the researcher has keep in mind the following five significant points made by Gilovich (1991) to help maintain researcher objectivity.

1. Our personal experiences tend to override information to the contrary, no matter how persuasive they may be.
2. We have a tendency to make up our minds on insufficient evidence.
3. We are more than likely to seek out and notice information that confirms what we already believe.
4. We are also likely to overlook or downgrade information that contradicts what we already believe.
5. We tend to be less critical of information that supports our pre-existing beliefs and more critical of information that challenges them.

#### **Principal's Interview Protocol**

1. How would you describe your style of leadership?
2. Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.
3. What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?
4. How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?
5. Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.
6. How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?
7. How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?

8. Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.
9. Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?
10. What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?
11. What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?

### **Teacher’s Interview Protocol**

1. How would you describe your principal’s style of leadership?
2. Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.
3. What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?
4. How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?
5. Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.
6. How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?
7. How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?
8. Explain the principal’s process for conducting teacher evaluations.
9. Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what

ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?

10. What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?
11. What is your principal's philosophy regarding "All students can learn"?

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRESENTATION OF DATA**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research study is to examine the leadership styles of 10 elementary school principals who work in the south suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. Each of the 10 schools has been identified through their state report card as having a majority student population living in poverty. This research study examines the leadership styles of five schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is to determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress is not achieved.

Two dilemmas persists regarding leadership: (1) the leadership construct is very complex and one definition is not all encompassing; and (2) the perceptions of the behavior of those in role of leadership is often based on the understanding or limitation of one's understanding of the practice of leadership.

Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001) wrote, "Knowing what leaders do is one thing, but without a rich understanding of how and why they do it, our understanding is incomplete." A desire to define leadership has dominated much of the leadership research, and the topic has been addressed in many studies and continues to be addressed

today. According to Owens (1998), no one of those definitions on leadership will satisfy everyone; however, those definitions generally agree on two things: (a) leadership is a group function, because it occurs only in the processes of two or more people interacting, and (b) leaders intentionally seek to influence the behavior of other people.

Further review of the literature reveals that elements of leadership can be analyzed from two specific perspectives: (a) the two-factor theory, and (b) the four factor theory (e.g., Blake & Mouton, 1985; Fiedler, 1967; Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996; Likert, 1961; Rodriguez, 2002; Schriesheim & Bird, 1979). The two-factor theory consists of two particular elements that describe the leadership construct (a) people orientation and (b) task orientation. From a wider perspective, the four-factor theory is an expansion of the two-factor theory, with two additional elements included to the construct of leadership. The four elements are (a) leader, (b) follower, (c) organization and (d) task orientation.

A leader is the servant of the followers in that he/she removes the obstacles that prevent them from doing their jobs (DePree, 1989). Also, according to Kahn (1979) a leader has the authority to decide what should happen and who should do it, the responsibility to make it happen and the accountability for what does actually happen. Additionally, Kelley (1992) stated “The best leaders are attuned to themselves and their relationship with others – they understand who they are as leaders, what their strengths and weaknesses are in the role, and how they affect others. Kelley also states “Followers determine not only if someone will be accepted as a leader, but also if that leader will be

effective. Effective followers are critical for a leader's or an organization's success.

Without followers, leadership is meaningless and leaders don't exist" (p. 13).

According to Bass and Avolio (1994), leaders and followers can be assigned a variety of tasks, and the characteristics of the assigned task can influence how the team should be structured and how it will function. Some task behaviors include telling people what, when, where and how to do something (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996). Furthermore, Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001) wrote, "To gain insight on leadership practice we need to understand the knowledge, expertise and skills that the leaders bring to the execution of the task."

The design of the interview questions are aimed at ascertaining how principals and teachers perceive leadership styles within the framework of the elements of leader, follower, organization and tasks.

The following sections are organized into 4 main categories: demographics for schools that achieved AYP according to state requirements; demographics for schools that did not achieve AYP according to state standards; interviews of principals and teachers at the five elementary schools that achieved AYP; and interviews of the principals and teachers of the five elementary schools that did not achieve AYP.

Each school consists of four participants, the principal and three self-selected teachers as explained in detail in the previous chapter. In order of sequence, the verbatim interview of the principal will occur first, followed by the verbatim interview of each of the three teachers from the respective school. This procedure is consistent throughout the process for both categories of schools.

Schools and participants have been assigned pseudonyms consistent with a category. Schools and participants that achieved AYP were provided with the pseudonym of a fruit to replace their actual name and maintain their confidentiality. Apple, Orange, Grape, Pear and Cherry represent the identities of schools and participants in the category of schools that achieved AYP. Schools that did not achieve AYP were provided with the pseudonym of a bird to replace their actual name and also maintain their confidentiality. Robin, Dove, Cardinal, Blue Jay and Finch represent the identities of schools and participants that did not achieve AYP. In addition to the pseudonym of fruit or bird, all participants self-selected an identifying marker that would allow the researcher to distinguish each individual participant from others in the same sample school. This was later changed during the analysis of data and principals and teachers were respectively provided with the markers of “P” for principal and “T” for teachers.

### **Demographics of Schools that Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

The grade levels for schools Apple, Orange, Grape, Pear and Cherry are kindergarten through sixth. The percentage of poverty level for each school is as follows: Apple – 67%, Orange – 90%, Grape – 85%, Pear – 90% and Cherry – 92.3%.

The five elementary schools that achieved AYP had principals who ranged from 44 to 54 years of age. Each of the principals had master’s degrees and four of the five principals were females. The average length of time of being a principal was 16 years with 4 years and 34 years respectively being the shortest time and longest time of being a



principal. Being a principal in their current building level position ranged from 4 to 27 years (see Figure 6).

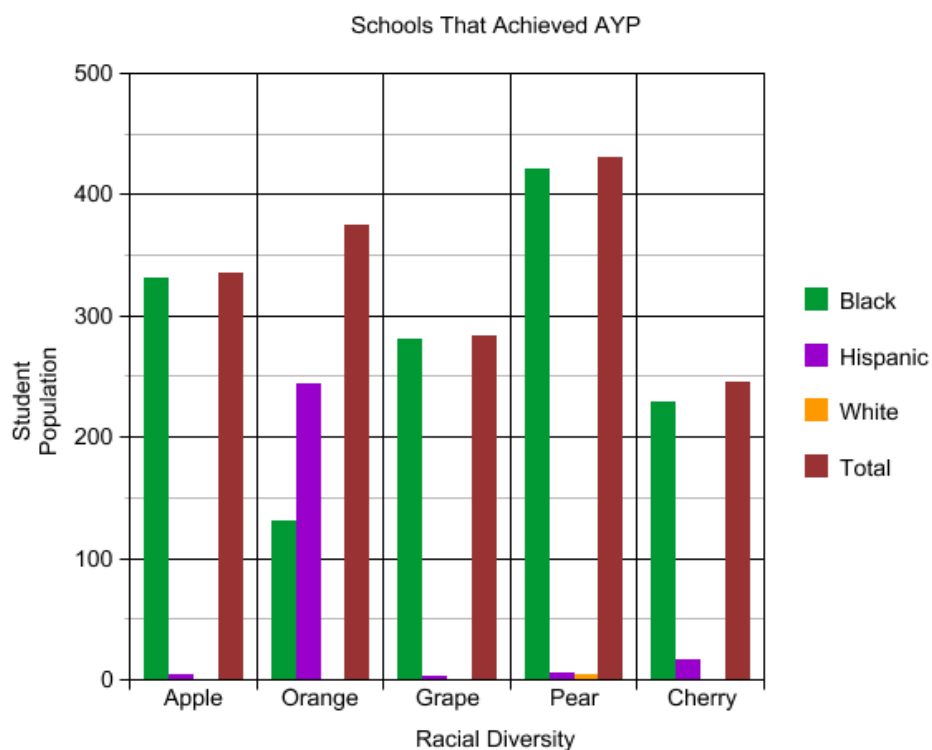


Figure 4. Student Diversity at Schools that Achieved AYP

	Black	Hispanic	White	Total
<b>Apple</b>	331	4	0	335
<b>Orange</b>	131	244	0	375
<b>Grape</b>	280	3	0	283
<b>Pear</b>	421	5	4	430
<b>Cherry</b>	229	16	0	245

Figure 5. Numerical Diversity of Students at Schools that Achieved AYP

	<b>Apple</b>	<b>Orange</b>	<b>Grape</b>	<b>Pear</b>	<b>Cherry</b>
<b>Age</b>	53	54	51	61	44
<b>Gender</b>	Female	Male	Female	Female	Female
<b>Level of Education</b>	Masters	Masters	Masters	Masters	Masters
<b>Number of Years as Principal</b>	13	27	5	34	4
<b>Number of Years as Principal at Current School</b>	9	27	5	10	4

Figure 6. Principals at Schools that Achieved AYP

The 15 teachers in the five elementary schools that achieved AYP ranged from 28 to 62 years of age. The average age was 44 for this sample of teachers. Their educational level indicated four teachers had bachelors' degrees and 11 teachers had masters' degrees. The average length of time as a teacher was 10.8 years and the average length of time for being a teacher in their current school was 8.3 years (see Figure 7).

Each school is represented by three teachers who bear the same name given to said school.

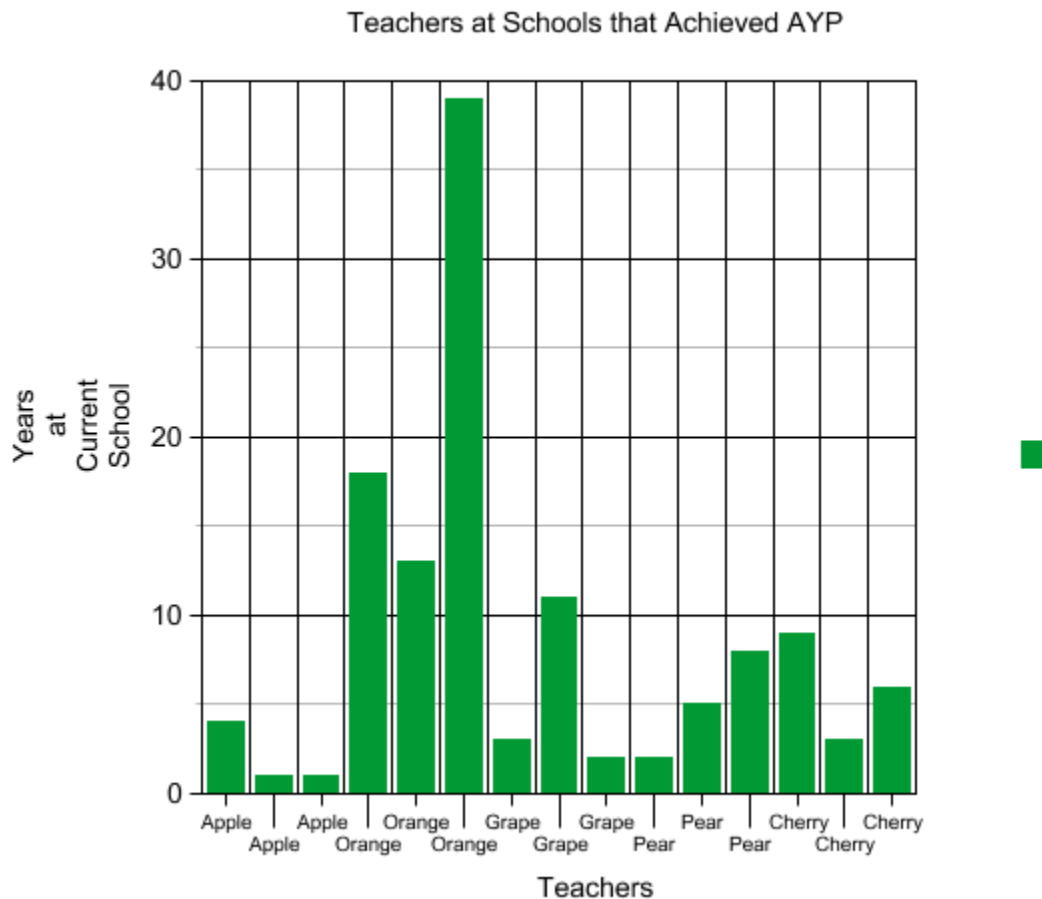


Figure 7. Teachers at Schools that Achieved AYP

#### **Demographics of Schools that Did Not Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

The grade levels for Robin and Cardinal are kindergarten through fifth. Blue Jay and Finch has grades kindergarten through sixth and dove has kindergarten through eighth. The percentage of poverty level for each school is as follows: Robin – 67%, Dove – 90%, Cardinal – 50%, Blue Jay – 75% and Finch – 87%.

The five elementary schools that did not achieve AYP had principals who ranged from 36 to 58 years of age. Four of the principals had masters' degrees and the

remaining principal had a doctorate degree. All of the principals were females. The average length of time for being a principal was 8.6 years with 3 years and 14 years respectively being the shortest time and longest time for being a principal. Being a principal in their current building level position ranged from 3 to 9 years (see Figure 10).

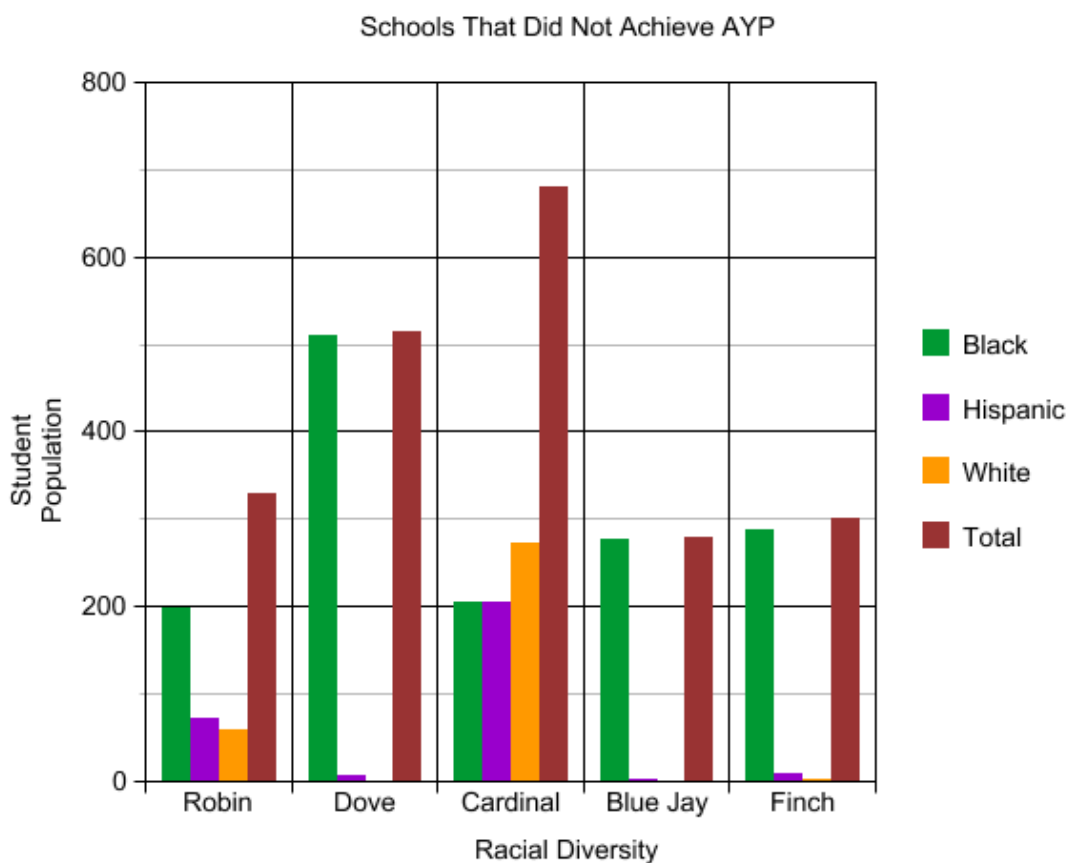


Figure 8. Student Diversity at Schools that Did Not Achieve AYP

	<b>Black</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Robin</b>	198	73	59	330
<b>Dove</b>	509	6	0	515
<b>Cardinal</b>	204	204	273	681
<b>Blue Jay</b>	277	3	0	280
<b>Finch</b>	288	9	3	300

Figure 9. Numerical Diversity of Students at Schools that Did Not Achieve AYP

	<b>Robin</b>	<b>Dove</b>	<b>Cardinal</b>	<b>Blue Jay</b>	<b>Finch</b>
<b>Age</b>	55	36	57	47	58
<b>Gender</b>	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
<b>Level of Education</b>	Masters	Masters	Masters	Doctorate	Masters
<b>Number of Years as Principal</b>	13	3	4	14	9
<b>Number of Years as Principal at Current School</b>	8	3	3	10	9

Figure 10. Principals at Schools that Did Not Achieve AYP

The 15 teachers in the five elementary schools that did not achieve AYP ranged from 29 to 71 years of age. The average age for his sample of teachers was 42. Their educational level indicated three teachers with bachelors' degrees and one teacher with a masters' degree. The average length of time as a teacher was 13.2 years and the average length of time for being a teacher in their current school was 7.1 years (see Figure 11).

Each school is represented by three teachers who bear the same name given to said school.

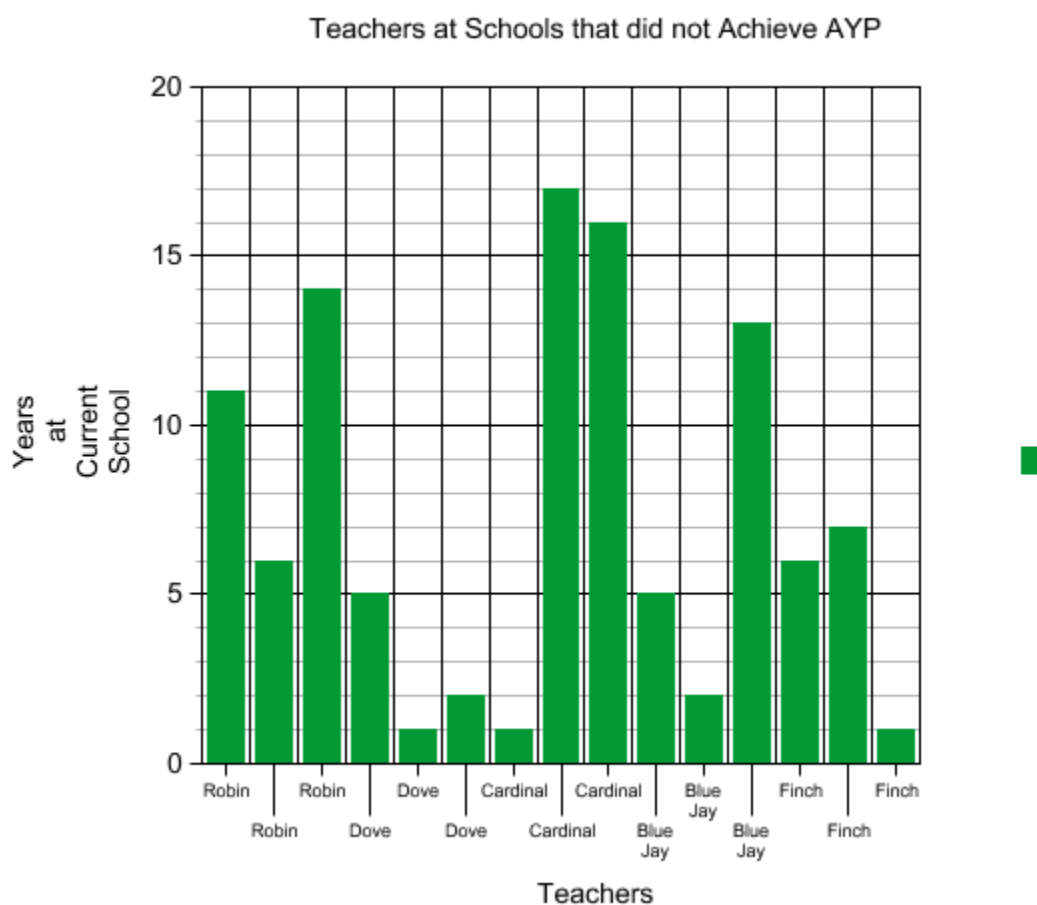
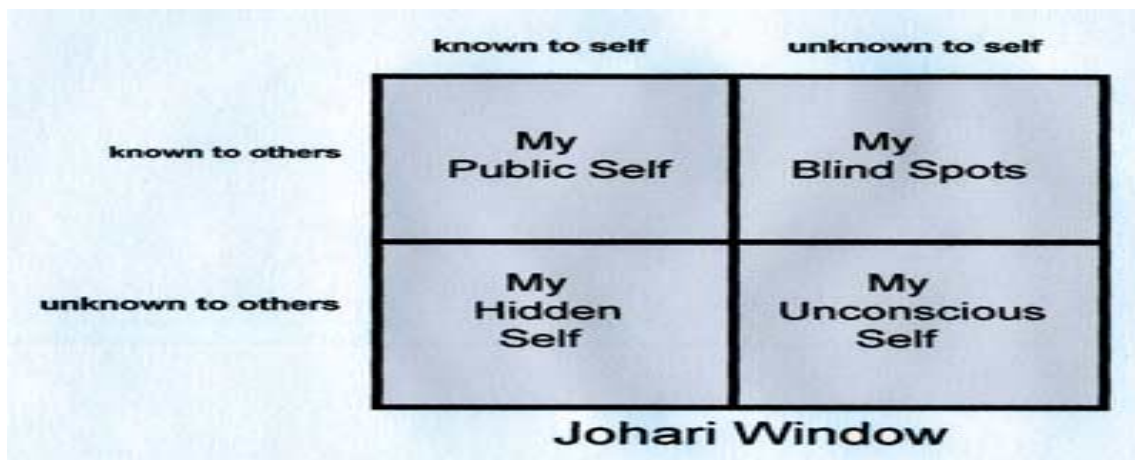


Figure 11. Teachers at Schools that Did Not Achieve AYP

Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham (as cited in Sources of Light, 2009) developed the Johari Window, a model for understanding how therapy can be used to have more fulfilling lives (see Figure 12).



Note: Retrieved from: (<http://sourcesofinsight.com/2009/04/06/know-and-share-yourself-enough>)

Figure 12. Johari Window

The Johari Window has significance for this research study because it can also be specifically used to develop better understanding of interactions in social and professional relationships. My *Public Self* is what I show others about me. My *Hidden Self* is what I choose to hide from others. My *Blind Spots* are parts of me others see but I do not. My *Unconscious Self* is part of me I do not see nor do others.

The perceptions of the principals in this study represent the principals' public self or a blind spot that is unknown to the principal. By comparison and contrast, the teachers' perception of the principals' behavior may be aligned with the principal's perception of what is known to self and what is known to others or the teacher may know

the blind spots of the principal that are unknown to the principal. In essence, the responses of all participants in this study are based on their individual perceptions.

In the following sections the letters P (principal) and T (teacher) are used to distinguish interview questions. The letter “P” represents the principal’s responses and the letters “T1, T2 and T3” represent responses from the three teachers.

### **Interviews at Schools that Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

#### **Apple School**

##### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is situational or what’s warranted; a facilitator; supportive and participant leader.

##### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal’s style of leadership?**

T1. The principal leads, shares and shows, not manages; T2. The principal is an iron fisted leader; no modeling, mentoring or coaching; T3. The principal is a dictator; does not give reasons as to the why or now.

The data suggests the principal has a self-perception of a situational and supportive leadership style. Only one of the three teachers reported the principal leads and shares. The remaining two teachers indicated an iron fisted and dictatorship style.

##### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. Volunteers and selected teachers are involved in school decision making.

##### **Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**



T1. Principal solicits ideas from everyone; T2. Principal makes decisions; T3.

Principal does not recognize teacher input.

The data from the principal suggests the principal relies on selecting teachers and volunteers. One teacher's perception indicated the principal solicits ideas from everyone. The other two teachers reported that the principal makes decisions and does not recognize teacher input.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. Everyone plays a role.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal takes care of everything; she leaves her personal problems outside of school; T2. It's her way or the highway; T3. We're told to do everything, not how; it's the carrot or the stick.

The principal reported that everyone plays a role in establishing the culture of the school. All three teachers stated directly or implicitly that it's the principal who takes care of everything in the building.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I encourage staff to stay involved.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal pushes involvement; T2. Teacher leadership is pushed by the district; T3. Principal does not encourage teacher leadership.

The reported data suggests the principal encourages staff to be involved. One teacher had a similar perception of the principal. However, the two other teachers reported that leadership is pushed by the district, not the principal.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. There is input from all staff, parents and students.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Vision is communicated with all staff; T2. Vision is handed down from district; T3. We have regular staff meetings and emails.

The reported data states that the principal utilized input from staff, parents and students. All three teachers reported the vision is communicated with staff through regular staff meetings and emails. However, one teacher reported the vision is handed down from the district.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. Teachers constantly look at data.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. There is an ongoing focus on ISAT; T2. We look at data and collaborate with each other; T3. We align curriculum with state standards.

The principal and all three teachers reported that data is constantly reviewed. There is facilitation of collaboration among teachers and alignment of the curriculum with state standards.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. I include input from all teachers.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. We gather data; SIP committee member; T2. Everyone has a role in SIP; T3. One person wrote SIP; no one else involved.

The reported data suggests the principal solicits input from all teachers. Two of the teachers confirm the principal does ask for input from all teachers. The remaining teachers stated that only one person was involved in the development of the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I evaluate all teachers formally and informally

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal uses frequent formal and informal classroom visits; T2. Principal uses formal and informal evaluations; T2. Principal only conducts formal evaluations on me.

The principal and two teachers reported that formal and informal evaluations are conducted. One teacher reported that only formal evaluations are conducted with her.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. All meetings are curriculum related.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal uses collaboration, curriculum mapping and grade level meetings;  
T2. Principal uses regularly scheduled staff meetings; T3. I have not observed any collaboration.

The principal reported the staff meetings are always curriculum related. Two of the teachers indicated there are regularly scheduled staff meeting, collaboration and curriculum mapping. The remaining teacher reported she had not observed any collaboration.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I use workshops and teacher presentations.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal is supportive, caring and rewarding; T2. Principal encourages, models and mentors; T3. Principal yells at teachers and students; does not motivate.

The principal reported workshops and presentations as a practice for motivating teachers, but provided no direct information for motivating students. Two teachers reported a practice of supporting, caring, encouraging and modeling from the principal. The remaining teacher reported the principal yells at teachers and students and does not motivate.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn if taught to individually.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Principal is an advocate of all students can learn; T2. Teachers can reach and teach all students; T3. Principal believes all students can learn.

The principal and all three teachers were in agreement regarding the principal’s philosophy that all children can learn.

According to the data regarding the Apple School, the principal has a self-perception of a situational, supportive leadership style. Additional self-perceptions of the principal include the solicitation of volunteers and selected teachers in decision making. The data indicates the principal perceives everyone has a role in establishing the school

culture. Similarly the principal perceives that everyone is involved in the shared vision and the development of the SIP. Lastly, the principal indicated workshops and teacher presentations are used to motivate teachers and students as well as to focus on ISAT improvement.

The data suggest that two of the three teachers interviewed perceived the principal's leadership style as being iron-fisted and similar to a dictatorship. Only one teacher indicated the principal shares and demonstrates what is expected. Two of the teachers indicated the principal makes the decisions, not the teachers. The third teacher reported the principal solicits ideas and input from all faculty.

Two teachers stated the principal has established the culture of the school by telling people what to do because it's the principal's way or the highway. The third teacher indicated the principal takes care of everyone and everything. Two teachers indicated that leadership is not pushed by the principal. The remaining teacher reported the principal does encourage leadership. All three teachers agreed the principal does facilitate a shared vision through email communications and staff meetings. It was also a consensus among the three teachers that the principal does ensure teacher focus on ISAT improvement through review of data, collaboration and alignment of curriculum with the state standards. Only one teacher indicated the SIP was written by one person. The other two teachers stated the SIP was a result of everyone's input. All three teachers and the principal were of the perception that the teacher evaluation procedures were both informal and formal. The principal and two of the teachers were of the same accord in regards to having professional learning community practices in the school. One teacher

had not observed any collaboration among the teachers regarding a professional learning community. Two teachers stated the principal does motivate staff and students through modeling, caring, rewarding and mentoring. One teacher reported the principal does not motivate staff or students.

All three teachers and the principal were of one accord in that the principal did have a philosophy that all children could learn.

### **Orange School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. I feel that I have a situational style of leadership.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. The principal is cooperative; good leader; T2. Principal is main person; very strict; T3. Principal leads by example.

The data indicated the principal has a self-perception as a situational leader. The three teachers have perceptions that view him as a cooperative good leader, very strict and who leads by example.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. Leadership team meets monthly and I honor their decisions.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal allows you to try your own solutions; T2. We are included in decision making; T3. Principal always ask questions for input.

According to the data the principal solicits and honors the decisions of the teachers. All three teachers concur that the principal includes the teachers in decision making.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I set standards and rules and maintain equilibrium.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal establishes positive environment; T2. Principal ensures cohesiveness; positive with students and staff; T3. Principal is a caring person; married to the school.

The data indicates the principal sets the rules and standards and ensures staff cohesiveness and a positive environment. All three teachers are in agreement with this assessment.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I form committees and allow staff to make decisions to develop/encourage teacher leadership.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal allows us to take chances; T2. Principal gently forces us to be part of the team; T3. Principal provides opportunities to do things differently.



The data suggests the principal forms committees and allows staff opportunities to take risks and do things as part of a team effort.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. I have committees and leadership team to address school concerns to facilitate a shared vision.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal solicits staff input; T2. There is staff input and discussion of school vision; T3. Principal models what he expects.

According to the data the principal models what he expects and solicits staff input via discussions regarding the vision of the school.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I focus on ISAT goals and objectives at grade level meetings.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal has meetings to focus on ISAT data; T2. Principal sets ISAT goals based on data; T3. Principal allows us a range of activities to raise scores.

The data suggests the principal requires the teachers to focus on ISAT goals and objectives at grade level meetings. The three teachers are in agreement regarding this perception of the principal

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. I have a leadership team and committees.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I have never been part of the SIP committee; T2. I am not on SIP committee, but I do have input; T3. Principal often asks my opinion; trusts my judgment.

According to the data the principal has a leadership team and committees for purposes of SIP development. One teacher is not part of the SIP committee while the other two teachers acknowledge reception of their input for the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I follow the contract; pre-observation, observation and post-observation.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal follows contract; T2. Principal follows contract; T3. Principal follows contract; gets teacher input regarding lesson to be observed.

According to the data the principal follows the contract by having a pre-observation, observation and a post-observation evaluation schedule. Each of the three teachers concurs with the stated scheduled teacher evaluation process.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. All attendees at workshops present to staff; teachers are encouraged to try new strategies.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. We attend workshops and present to staff; T2. We attend workshops and present to staff; T3. We attend workshops, present to staff, and participate on committees.

The data suggest the principal encourages staff to attend workshops, present to staff and participate on committees. The three teachers are in agreement with the principal's assessment.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I create an environment that empowers teachers and make environment a place where they want to come,

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal is a good role model; knowing the students; and making home visits; T2. Principal greets everyone with a positive “good morning”; T3. Principal's involvement and commitment to everyone in the school.

The self-perception of the principal's practices and the teachers' perception of the principal's practices seem to be aligned with similar elements: ensure an environment where people want to come; be a good role model; being positive and committed to the school.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn if you tap into their learning style.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal's philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Principal wants each student to reach their potential; T2. The principal's behavior indicates he believes all students can learn; T3. Principal believes all students can learn.

The data from the principal and all three teachers indicate the principal believes all students can learn.

According the data regarding the Orange School, the principal has a self-perception of a situational leadership style. Other self-perceptions include having staff involved in the decision making; the formation of committees and leadership teams to address the school vision; and providing teachers with opportunities in participate in leadership roles. The principal also indicated ISAT improvement and the SIP is a result of a collective staff effort to respectively focus on ISAT goals and objectives and obtain input from all staff regarding the SIP. The principal and all three teachers are in agreement regarding the process for conducting teacher evaluations; having workshops and sharing new teaching strategies to promote a professional learning community;

creating an environment that empowers teachers and attractive to students; and having the philosophy that all students can learn.

All three teachers indicated the principal has a cooperative leadership style that reflects leading by example. The three teachers concur that the principal always asks for teachers' input and allows for teachers to make decisions.

Although the principal indicated standards and rules are established by him, the teachers indicated the school environment is caring and positive as a result of the principal. Each of the three teachers stated the principal solicits input and models behavior to ensure the school vision is a shared one.

### **Grape School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is democratic.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is top-down; decisions come from the top; T2. Principal does not listen; teachers' input is insignificant; T2; Principal's style is dictatorship.

The data suggests the principal has a democratic self-perception regarding her leadership style. However, the three teachers indicated the leadership style of the principal is top-down and more of a dictatorship.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. I always ask for suggestions and input.

**Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal asks for suggestions, but she makes decisions; T2. Principal does what she wants; T3. Principal makes final decisions.

The principal indicated she solicits input from the teachers in regards to school decision making. According to the data from all three teachers, the principal makes the decisions regardless of input from the teachers.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I try to model and be visible.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal has fostered little teamwork; T2. Principal knit-picks and morale is low; T3. We have no cohesiveness; negative culture.

The principal cited her visibility and modeling as contributing to the culture of the school. All three teachers reported little fostering of teamwork, low morale, no cohesiveness, and a negative school culture.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I have teachers spotlight their activities for other staff.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Teachers share strategies with other teachers; T2. Principal asks teachers she likes to do things; T3. Principal does not encourage leadership.

The data indicates the principal has teachers share their activities and strategies with other teachers. One teacher was in total agreement with the principal. One of other teachers expressed that the principal is selective regarding the assignment of tasks. The remaining teacher indicated that the principal does not encourage leadership.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. Staff with certain abilities are involved in the vision.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal has not facilitated a shared vision; T2. Principal has not facilitated a shared vision; T3. We do not have a shared vision or consistency.

The principal indicated that select staff are involved in the vision of the school. All three teachers stated the principal has not facilitated a shared vision.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I use analysis of data; use of additional support.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal uses data analysis, weekly meetings, and supplemental materials; T2. Reading coach prepares teachers for ISAT; T3. ISAT practice begins in January and it's rammed down our throat.

According to the data the principal and the three teachers cited analysis of data, meetings, supplemental materials and ISAT practice material as vehicles to assist with ISAT improvement.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. Teachers and parents are solicited to participate.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I'm on the school leadership team; T2. I am not involved with SIP; T3. I am not involved with SIP.

The principal solicits teachers and parents to participate in the development of the SIP. Only one of the teachers is a member of the leadership team that assists in the development of the SIP. The other two teachers are not involved in SIP development.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. We follow union contract; pre-observation, observation and post-observation for tenured and non-tenured staff.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal follows contract; evaluations are not constructive; T2. Principal does not follow contract; T3. Principal follows contract; methods cause problems.

According to the data, the principal follows the union contract of conducting a pre-observation, observation and post-observation regarding teacher evaluations. Two



teachers agree that the contract is followed by the principal. Only one teacher indicated the contract is not followed.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I use professional development for primary, intermediate and upper grade; staff presentations.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. No professional learning community due to leadership; T2. Principal is selective regarding who attends workshops; T3. Lots of workshops.

According to the principal professional development is provided for all teachers at all grade levels. One teacher reported there is no professional learning community because of the leadership. The two other teachers indicated there are lots of workshops, but one stated the principal is selective regarding who can attend.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I employ workshops, professional development and sharing information with staff and students.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal employs PBIS, Eagle Bucks and lunch for teachers; T2. There are motivational speakers for students; nothing for teachers; T3. There is no motivation for students or teachers.

The principal reported that workshops, professional development and the sharing of information are used to motivate teachers and students. Only one teacher reported practices by the principal aimed at motivating teachers. Two teachers agreed that there was a practice in place for motivating students. The teacher pointed out there is no motivation for students or teachers that comes from the principal.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. Do whatever it takes; all students can learn from doing.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Do not know; reading coach is source of instructional leadership; T2. Principal believes all students can learn; T3. Principal feels all students can learn.

All three teachers agree with the principal in her perception that all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Grape School, the principal has a self-perception of a democratic leadership style. Other self-perception of the principal include asking for teacher suggestions and input; modeling behavior; encouraging teacher leadership; promoting a shared school vision; and soliciting teachers to participate in the development of the SIP.

The data suggests all three teachers view the principal leadership style as top-down with no significant input from teachers. Additionally, the three teachers indicated the principal does not involve teachers in school decision making and the school culture is negative and morale is low because of the principal. Reportedly, the principal does not facilitate a shared vision and only one of the three teachers is involved in the SIP development.

There was consensus among the three teachers regarding the ongoing focus on the ISAT through data analysis, weekly meetings, coaching and supplemental materials. There was lack of consensus regarding the teacher evaluation procedure. Two teachers reported the principal as following the union contract of pre-observations, observations and post observations. One teacher stated the principal does not follow the contract and the other two teachers added the evaluations are not constructive and the method causes problems.

In regards to professional learning communities, two teachers reported having lots of workshops, but one stated the principal is selective regarding who attends the workshops. One teacher indicated there is no professional learning community due to the leadership.

Only one of the teachers reported practices by the principal that motivate teachers and two teachers reported practices by the principal that motivate the students.

All three teachers did indicate the principal does have the philosophy all students can learn.

### **Pear School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. I empower teachers.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is a team approach; T2. Principal's style of leadership is collaborative; T3. Principal's style of leadership is teacher-first approach to situations.

According to the data the self-perception of the principal is one of empowering teachers. The three teachers pointed out that the principal demonstrates a collaborative team approach that has a teacher-first approach to situations.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. I involve teachers with committees, committees, committees.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. I'm on 2 committees; brainstorm for ideas from staff; T2. I'm on school leadership team; T3. Principal comes to me for input; includes staff in decision-making process.

The data suggests the self-perception of the principal's strategy regarding school decision making is to involve the teachers on committees. The three teachers agree with how the principal involves staff in decision making.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I set the tone; positive; willing to listen.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal models behavior; laid back; does not micro-manage; T2. Principal involves everyone in school related concerns; T3. Culture is teacher-staff driven.

The principal indicated she sets the tone, is positive and willing to listen. Each of the three teachers concur and state further the principal models behavior, involves everyone and establishes a culture that is teacher-staff driven.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I develop/encourage teacher leadership with empowerment of teachers.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal encourages to take leadership roles in meetings; T2. Principal solicits input; asks us to attend workshops; T3; Principal encourages us to handle problems.

The data from the principal and three teachers seem to indicate that empowerment for and encouragement to the teachers to assume leadership roles is one method of developing/encouraging teacher leadership.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. I facilitate a shared vision with modeling and believing in what we say we can do.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal fosters a team approach to learning and meeting AYP; T2. Principal solicits our input; T3. Principal solicits our input regarding direction of school.

The data from the principal and three teachers seem to indicate the principal models and believes in staff by fostering a team approach and soliciting input from staff.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I use classroom monitoring, meetings, and talking with students.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal uses staff meetings and grade-level meetings; T2. Principal uses meetings, test preps, data examination, and academic group; T3. Principal reviews test scores.

According to the data the principal monitors the classrooms, conducts meetings and has conversations with students regarding focusing on ISAT. The three teachers concurred with principal's perception and stated further that test preps, academic

grouping and reviewing test scores were included in the strategies used to focus on ISAT improvement.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. I have included teachers by committees' work on SIP.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I'm on SIP team; T2. Everyone works on the SIP; T3. SIP meetings with staff and ways of including parents.

According to the data collected from the principal and three teachers, the principal does includes everyone in the development of the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. Assistant Principal and I follow district evaluation plan.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal and assistant principal follow informal and formal plan; T2. Principal follows district plan; T3. Principal follows district procedures.

According to the data collected from the principal and three teachers, the principal follows the district evaluation procedures for teachers.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual**

**improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I have in-services in and out of building; collaborate with all stakeholders.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal facilitates through collaboration; training and workshops; T2. Principal facilitates with professional development workshops; T3. Principal collaborates with teachers in our building and other teachers in the district.

According to the data collected from the principal and the three teachers, training, professional development workshops and collaboration with stakeholders and teachers in the school building and other teachers in the district contribute to a professional learning community.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I employ staying positive and constant conversation with staff.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**



T1. PBIS for students, thank you, emails, positive conversations with teachers;  
 T2. There is support for teachers; acknowledges achievement of students; T3. Principal facilitates team setting for teachers, students and parents.

The data suggests the principal creates a positive work environment by facilitating a team setting that is supportive for teachers and recognizing the achievement of students.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn in different time frames.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. All can learn with different strategies; T2. All students can learn; T3. Principal personifies all students can learn.

According to the data the principal believes all students can learn. Each of the three teachers concurs with the principal’s perception.

According to the data regarding the Pear School, the principal has a self-perception of having a leadership style that empowers teachers. Other self-perceptions of the principal include utilizing committees in regards to decision making; setting a positive tone and modeling behavior to influence the school culture and school vision; encourages teachers to take leadership roles in the school; daily monitoring, staff meetings and data review to focus on ISAT; and committees aimed at SIP improvement.

The principal and the assistant principal conduct teacher evaluations according to the district evaluation plan. The methods of focus on ISAT and the SIP are consistent with the view of all three teachers.

The principal indicated professional learning communities are facilitated through in-services, collaboration and training with all stakeholders. Motivation is ensured through conversations with staff and staying positive. All three teachers stated the principal does motivate staff and students by providing incentives and acknowledgements.

The three teachers described the leadership style of the principal as being collaborative and team oriented. All three teachers indicated the principal establishes the school culture by modeling behavior and promoting a teacher-driven atmosphere. All three teachers also concur that decision making by teachers is encouraged by the principal. A shared vision and leadership development is a result of the modeling and empowering by the principal according to the three teachers. The three teachers agree the principal believes all students can learn.

### **Cherry School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My Style of leadership is situational.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is autocratic; T2. Principal's style of leadership is top-down; T3. Principal's style of leadership is hands off and collaborative.

The data suggests the principal has a self-perception of a situational leadership style. One teacher reported a collaborative style of leadership regarding the principal and the other two teachers reported an autocratic, top-down leadership style.

**Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. Some decisions are top-down; sometimes there is teacher input.

**Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal delegates; I'm not involved in decisions; T2. I don't recall staff having any input. T3. I have not had any opportunities to be involved in decision making.

The principal indicated some decisions are top-down and some decisions are a result of teacher input. All three teachers reported the decisions are made by the principal and staff is not involved in the decision making.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I play a tremendous role; I have high expectations and deadlines; I'm laid back.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. The culture was established before the principal came; T2. Strict environment; military style; T3. Principal attempts to create a family atmosphere.

The data from the principal suggests the principal conveys high expectations and allows people to operate in ways that are consistent with her expectations. One teacher reported the culture was established before the principal became principal. The second teacher indicated the culture at the school is strict and similar to the military. The third teacher indicated the principal attempts to create a family atmosphere.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I delegate when possible.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal encourages us to go back to school. T2. Principal does not instill leadership; T3. Principal puts staff in positions of leadership.

The principal reported she delegates whenever possible to encourage leadership. The three teachers expressed very different perceptions regarding the principal developing or encouraging leadership. Two of the teachers indicated the principal encourages leadership by putting staff in leadership positions or promoting continuing education among staff. The remaining teacher's perception indicated the principal does not instill leadership.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. Everyone knows what is expected; focus on AYP.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal has certain people she uses to facilitate the vision; T2. Shared vision is facilitated through focusing on AYP; T3. The vision of making AYP was there before Principal came; she just follows it.

The principal's perception of a shared vision is to have everyone focus on AYP. The three teachers agree that the shared vision of the staff is the focus on AYP.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I use data meetings; faculty focuses on student achievement.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal always discusses data; T2. Principal uses ISAT committee meetings;

T3. Principal uses rallies, meetings, ISAT club, after school programs.

According to the data collected from the principal and the three teachers, the principal has data meetings, rallies, ISAT committees, ISAT club and after school programs.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. Teacher representatives from primary, intermediate and upper grade and reading specialist have input into the Plan.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I'm on the SIP team; T2. I'm not involved with SIP; T3. Myself and a couple of teachers worked on the SIP.

According to the principal, representatives from all grade levels participate in the development of the SIP. Only one teacher out of three indicated she was not involved in the development of the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I follow district guidelines for pre-observation, observation and post-observation.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal’s process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal follows district guidelines; T2. Standard district teacher evaluation procedures are followed; T3. District evaluation is followed.

According to the data the principal and the three teachers agree that the principal does follow the school district’s teacher evaluation procedures.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I facilitate with grade level meetings, climate meetings, and outside agencies assist in areas of academic needs.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. We attend workshops and report back to faculty; T2. There are no speakers at school and no outside workshops; T3. District offers continuing education classes; the principal does not encourage teacher attendance.

The data suggests the principal utilizes grade level meetings, climate meetings and outside agencies to facilitate a professional learning community. Only one of the three teachers reported that the principal requires staff to attend workshops. The two other teachers indicated there are no outside workshops that the principal encourages staff to attend.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. There are incentives for students and staff.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal looks at best practices, attend workshops, motivate students through teacher improvement; T2. Principal is very strict and non-motivating; T3. Principal has award ceremony for recognition of student achievement.

According to the principal, incentives for teachers and students are employed to provide motivation. Two teachers reported the use of best practices and workshops for teachers and award ceremonies for recognition of student achievement. The remaining teacher reported the principal did not motivate staff or students.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn with necessary tools.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. All students can learn if given the opportunity; T2. All students receive tutoring; all students can learn. T3. Principal promotes the philosophy that all students can learn.

The collected data from the principal and three teachers suggests the principal believes all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Cherry School, the principal has a self-perception of a situational leadership style. The principal elaborated indicating that some decisions are top-down and others require teacher input. The principal perceives the culture to be impacted by having high expectations and deadlines. The principal reported the use of delegation to encourage teacher leadership; focusing on AYP as a shared vision; data meetings for faculty to focus on ISAT; and grade level meetings to obtain teacher input regarding SIP improvement.

The principal reported teacher evaluations follow district guidelines for pre-observations, observations and post-observations. Grade level meetings and climate meetings are utilized to foster a professional learning community. Additionally, the principal reported providing incentives for students and staff.

Two of the teachers reported the principal leadership style as being autocratic and top-down. Not one of the three teachers reported being involved in decision making. Reports from the three teachers vary; it is a culture that was established before the principal arrived; it is a strict military style; and an attempt is made to create a family atmosphere. Two teachers indicated the principal encourages leadership by placing staff



in leadership roles and encouraging us to go back to school. One teacher stated the principal does not encourage leadership.

The pursuit of making AYP is how the principal facilitates a shared vision according to all three teachers. All three teachers reported a continuous focus on ISAT improvement is consistent with the earlier statement by the principal. Only one teacher stated she was are not involved in the SIP. The other two teachers indicated their involvement with the development of the SIP.

All three teachers concur that the principal follows the district guidelines for teacher evaluations. The professional learning community is facilitated through the attendance of workshops and district continuing education classes according to two teachers. One teacher reported there are no outside workshops and no speakers come to the school for presentations. At least two of the teachers indicated the principal provides workshops and award assemblies for student achievement recognition. One teacher reported the principal is very un-motivating for teachers.

The three teachers did agree the principal does have the philosophy all students can learn.

## **Interviews at Schools that Did Not Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

### **Robin School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is collaborative.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is nurturing; T2. Principal's style of leadership is willingness to work with everyone; T3. Principal's style of leadership is a bit collaborative.

The data collected from the principal and the three teachers suggests the principal has a collaborative leadership style.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. I solicit verbal input, surveys, questionnaires.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal values our input; T2. Principal includes everyone in decision making process; T3. Principal believes everyone has something to offer.

According to the data from the principal and all three teachers, the principal involves the teachers in decision making through solicitation of their input, questionnaires and surveys.

#### **Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I establish rules; provide clear expectations.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. We come together as a caring group; T2. Principal shows positive intentions toward everyone; T3. Principal creates a family-oriented atmosphere.

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggests the principal plays a positive role in establishing the culture by providing clear rules and expectations and creating a positive family oriented atmosphere.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I develop/encourage teacher leadership by assuming leadership roles.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership by empowerment and encouragement to participate; T2. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership by encouraging us to create study groups and be group leaders; T3. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership by encouraging us to be on committees and make leadership decisions.

The data from the principal and the three teachers indicate that the principal empowers the teachers by encouragement to participate and assuming leadership roles.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. My collective vision is communicated in writing at Open House and PTA meetings.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal provides open discussions regarding school and district goals; T2. Principal has an implementation of PBIS and how we want student and teacher behavior to look; T3. Principal focuses on AYP and has positive expectations for staff and students

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggest the principal promotes a shared vision through open discussions, PBIS, focusing on AYP and having positive expectations for staff and students.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I examine data for strengths and weaknesses.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal has monthly meetings regarding goals; T2. We review data; ask questions and have a discussion regarding improving academic achievement; T3. We discuss ISAT scores and access multiple sources and strategies.

According to the data the principal and the three teachers, the principal requires the teachers to review test data, discuss ISAT scores, ask questions and access multiple sources and strategies.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. Teachers are included by internal review by teachers and classroom observation by teachers.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. Principal conducts peer reviews and peer coaching; T2. Everyone works on SIP; T3. There is a solicitation of all staff to work on SIP.

The data from the principal and three teachers suggests the principal utilizes internal reviews by the teachers, classroom observations, peer coaching/reviews and solicitation of all staff to work on the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I have formal and informal observations according to district policy.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal’s process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal has pre-observation, observation, and post-observation; she makes you feel comfortable; T2. Principal follows district policy; T3. Principal follows district evaluation tool and procedures to a “T”.

According to the data the principal and all three teachers agree that the principal uses informal and formal observations to evaluate teachers according to district policy.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual**

**improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I conduct needs assessment to determine professional development.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal encourages continuing education; T2. There are little opportunities to attend workshops; T3. There are lots of professional development.

The data suggests the principal conducts needs assessment to determine professional development. Two of the teachers reported the principal promotes staff development and continuing education. One teacher indicated there is little opportunity to attend workshops.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. There is PBIS for teachers and students. Everyone receives the tools to achieve.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. The principal pulls us together and focuses on teacher and student development; T2. There is PBIS and gifts for teachers; T3. There are incentives for students and appreciation for teachers.

The data reflects the principal uses PBIS for teachers and students as a means of motivation. The three teachers concur and add that there are incentives and appreciation for both teachers and students.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. We model to ensure everyone has opportunity to learn.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. We provide opportunities for everyone to learn; T2. Every student can learn if you go back and re-teach; T3. Every student is capable. Principal pushes us and we push the students.

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggests the principal believes all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Robin School, the principal has a self-perception of a collaborative leadership style. Additional self-perceptions of the principal include the solicitation of input from teachers to foster shared decision making; providing clear rules and expectations that impact the culture of the school; developing and encouraging teacher leadership through teachers assuming leadership roles; and facilitating a collective vision by communicating in writing to stakeholders.

The principal also reported the examination of data and regularly scheduled meetings to discuss multiple strategies for academic improvement in regard to continuous ISAT improvement. Also stated by the principal was the use of internal reviews by teachers and classroom observation by teachers to aid in the development of the SIP.

The principal reported the use of formal and informal teacher observations for teacher evaluations according to the district policy. Also reported by the principal was the practice of conducting needs assessment to determine professional development to assist with their professional learning community.

Finally the principal indicated the teachers and students receive PBIS and any tools necessary to achieve.

All three teachers concur the principal is nurturing, willing to work with everyone and collaborative regarding the leadership style. The mutual perceptions among the three teachers were as follows: everyone is involved in the decision making; the principal is caring and fostering of a family oriented atmosphere; staff is encouraged to participate and take on leadership roles; and there is open discussions regarding the shared vision of making AYP. There is consensus regarding the focusing on ISAT and the inclusion of all staff in the development of the SIP. The three teachers agree that the principal does follow the district guidelines for teacher evaluations. The encouragement for pursuing continuing education courses and having staff development to promote a professional learning community was agreed upon by two teachers. One teacher indicated there were no opportunities for workshops.



All three teachers agreed there was motivation in the form of PBIS and incentives for students and gifts and appreciation for teachers. The three teachers also agreed the principal believes all students can learn.

### **Dove School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is collaborative and top-down.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal is lax, not stern; T2. Principal is laid back; proactive when necessary; T3. Principal is strong; delegates well.

The data suggests the principal has a self perception of having a collaborative and top-down leadership style. All three teachers report a strong and laid back leadership style that is proactive when necessary.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. I conduct surveys and include people on leadership team and faculty meetings.

#### **Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. I'm involved on a higher level than most staff; T2. I'm involved through faculty meetings; T3. Principal often involves me in decision making.

According to the data the principal conducts surveys and includes staff on leadership teams. All three teachers concur the principal does involve staff in decision making through meetings.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I do hand holding, coaxing, have a positive attitude and make cosmetic changes to the building.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal delegates to staff, allowing people to take responsibility; T2. Principal has open door policy with students, parents, and teachers; T3. Principal sets the tone. She is a strong professional.

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggests the principal sets the tone by having a positive attitude; open door policy with students, parents and staff; delegates to staff.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I have a school leadership team and other leadership roles in the school.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership through delegation; T2. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership by placing teachers in various committees; T3. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership by identification and selection of certain people with leadership qualities.

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggests leadership is encouraged through delegation; school leadership team; and placement of teachers on committees.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. I have facilitated a shared vision through encouragement and assisting others in achieving the school's vision.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal accepts and invites ideas and has collaborative meetings; T2. Consultants work with teachers to make AYP; T3. Principal uses delegation, her language, and meetings aimed at AYP.

According to the data from the principal and all three teachers, encouragement, delegation, acceptance of ideas and collaborative meetings contribute to a shared vision.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I provide curriculum mapping, instructional coaching and various teaching strategies.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal provides ISAT coach and curriculum mapping; T2. Lesson plans are geared toward ISAT and there is after school tutoring; T3. There are ISAT specific personnel.

The data suggest the principal and the three teachers all agree the principal ensures focus on ISAT through lesson plans, curriculum mapping, after school tutoring and having ISAT personnel

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. School leadership team attends workshops and works with staff.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I'm the facilitator for SFA and I help write the SIP; T2. SIP committee; T3. I work on curriculum for special education.

The data suggests and the three teachers concur, the principal has all faculty included in the development of the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. The assistant principal and I follow district guidelines for teacher evaluation.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal follows district schedule of pre-observation, observation and post observation; T2. Principal follows district evaluation tool; very methodical; T3. Principal uses pre-observation, observation, and post observation.

According to the data the principal follows the district guideline for teacher evaluation. All three teachers are in agreement with the principal's assessment of the evaluation procedure.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I have regularly scheduled teacher meetings, teaching in different classrooms, and common planning time.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal uses grade level team meetings and lots of collaboration; T2. Principal uses joint planning time and attending workshops; T3. Principal uses working in small groups.

According to the data from the principal and the three teachers, the principal schedules grade level meetings, workshops, joint planning time and small group work.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I have celebrations for any growth of teachers or students.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal provides assemblies and outings for students; not much for teachers;

T2. Principal has the ability to talk and share with other teachers and students; T3.

Principal encourages staff and students to motivate each other.

The data collected from the principal and the 3 teachers suggest celebrations, outings and assemblies for students and the reliance on teachers to motivate each other.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn at a different pace using different methods.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Principal believes in SFA; T2. Principal is supportive of all students; T3.

Principal seeks opportunities to help all students.

The data from the principal and the three teachers are in agreement regarding the belief of the principal that all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Dove School, the principal has a self-perception of a collaborative and top-down leadership style. The principal also has a self-perception of including others in the decision making; impacting the culture of the school by having a positive attitude and coaxing; encouraging leadership by giving staff leadership roles; and assisting staff in achieving the school vision. The principal indicated ISAT improvement is focused on by curriculum mapping, instructional

coaching and various teaching methods. All three teachers agree with this perception regarding ISAT. The principal reported the use of teams for the development of the SIP. All three teachers concur with the principal's assessment of teacher involvement regarding development of the SIP.

The principal follows the district schedule of pre-observation, observation and post-observation for the teacher evaluation procedure. The three teachers agree that the principal follows the district procedures. The professional learning community is promoted through regularly scheduled teachers and common planning time according to the principal. The three teachers are of the same accord as the principal regarding how professional learning communities are facilitated in the school.

According to the principal and the three teachers, there are motivating celebrations for any growth of teachers and students and the principal does believe all students can learn.

The three teachers have very different perceptions regarding the leadership style of the principal: one teacher's view is the principal is lax; the second teacher's view is the principal is laid back and proactive when necessary; and the remaining teacher reported a strong principal who delegates well.

The three teachers agreed that the principal has a philosophy all students can learn.

### **Cardinal School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is transformational.

**Question #1 – How would you describe your principal’s style of leadership?**

T1. Principal’s style of leadership is collaborative and always surveys staff; T2.

Principal’s style of leadership is very fair and strong; T3. Principal is very good at bringing us together to discuss what is needed.

The data collected from the principal suggest the leadership style is transformational. The data from the three teachers suggest a collaborative style; fair open discussions with surveys of staff.

**Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. We make decisions based on data.

**Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Opinions are solicited; T2. Principal involves me extensively; T3. Principal is very open; we feel together as a group.

According to the data from the principal and three teachers, it seems the principal solicits input from all staff and decisions are based on data.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I model what I expect.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**



T1. Principal believes in cooperation and collaboration; she includes everyone as much as possible; T2. Principal plays an active role; she reaches everyone; T3. Principal is a positive role model; good rapport.

The data suggests the principal models what is expected from the teachers. The three teachers concur and add that the principal plays an active role by reaching out to everyone and including everyone.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I develop/encourage team leaders at every grade level; I let them run their show.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership with grade level team leadership; T2. Principal develops/encourages teacher leadership with workshops, work study groups, and professional development; T3. Principal surveys us for ideas for professional development.

According to the data from the principal and all three teachers, the principal encourages leadership through grade level meetings, work study groups and solicitation of ideas for professional development.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. I facilitate a shared vision by making sure the vision is visible to everyone.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. It's unspoken, but we all know the vision is the children's progress; T2.

Principal facilitates vision by encouragement to perform at our best; T3. Principal facilitates vision by prioritizing our vision in a group setting.

The data from the principal and the three teachers seems to indicate the principal facilitates a shared vision by prioritizing the vision in group settings and encouraging faculty to perform at their best.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I ensure teachers' focus by discussion of curriculum weaknesses and involvement of all faculty.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal ensures teachers' focus by memos, surveys, and programs aimed at ISAT; T2. Principal examines data and best practices; T3. Principal reviews data, posters in hallways and positive reinforcement.

The data suggests the principal sends memos; surveys; review data; examines best practices; and provides positive reinforcement.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. Teachers work as a team.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. Staff is waiting to discuss the SIP; T2. I'm on the internal review committee; T3. I'm part of the internal review committee.

The data seems to indicate the principal facilitates a team approach to working on the SIP. All three teachers concur and add that teachers are part of an internal review committee and other staff are waiting to discuss the findings.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. We use pre-observation, observation, and post observation.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal follows district guidelines; T2. Principal follows the contract; T3. Principal does pre-observation, observation, and post-observation.

The data indicates the principal follows the district guideline of pre-observation, observation and post-observation. All three teachers concur with the principal's assessment of the teacher evaluation procedure.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. We have study groups for various topics.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to**

**learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal uses collaboration, meetings, and staff development; T2. Principal uses study groups, workshops and review of materials; T3. Principal uses new practices and workshops.

According to the data from the principal and the three teachers, the principal utilizes study groups, staff meetings, collaboration and review of new practices.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I have conversations on improvement with teachers and students.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. We have celebrations for teachers and students; T2. We have celebrations of achievement; T3. We have PBIS for students and new programs for teachers.

The data suggests the principal motivates by having conversations with teachers and students and having celebrations of achievements.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn given the right framework and background.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Each teacher has everything to help each student; T2. We reach all children by individualizing instruction; T3. We find ways to reach all students.

The data from the principal and the three teachers suggests the principal does feel that all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Cardinal School, the principal has a self-perception of a transformational leadership style. Additional self-perceptions include using staff feedback and input to make decisions; modeling what is expected to influence the culture; encouraging teacher leadership through grade level team leadership; making sure the vision is visible to everyone; facilitating focus on ISAT via discussion of curriculum weaknesses; and involvement of all faculty. All three teachers concur with this perception regarding providing staff input, how the school culture is influenced by the principal, the method of facilitating the shared vision, and the focusing on ISAT. The three teachers reported the review of data, positive reinforcement, memos, surveys and programs are included in the principal's method of ensuring teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement.

The three teachers also concur with the principal's view that the teachers works as a team in the development of the SIP.

The principal reported the teacher evaluations follow the district guideline of a pre-observation, observation and post-observation. Study groups, collaboration, meetings and staff development are practices used to promote a professional learning community. The three teachers agree that the method of conducting teacher evaluations and the

reported practices for promoting a professional learning community are consistent with the assessment of the principal.

Both the principal and the three teachers provide similar reports that state the principal motivates teachers and students with conversations on improvement and celebrations of achievement.

The three teachers described the principal's leadership style as strong, fair and collaborative. Lastly, the three teachers are of the same perception that the principal has a philosophy all students can learn.

### **Blue Jay School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is democratic and shared; I lead with my heart.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is dictatorship; T2. Principal's style of leadership is dictatorship and "just do it"; T3. Principal's style of leadership is trying to please people; not authoritative.

According to the data the principal has a self perception of having a democratic leadership style. Two of the teachers described the principal as having a dictatorship leadership style. The remaining teacher reported the principal attempts to please everyone.

**Question # 2 - Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. Teachers are involved with the school leadership team and support staff help make decisions.

**Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal does not include staff in decision making; T2. Principal does not involve us; T3. We don't make decisions.

The data from the principal suggests the principal includes the school leadership team and support staff in the decision making. All three teachers reported the principal does not involve teachers in decision making.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I model behavior and establish expectations.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. Principal projects what she thinks the culture is; T2. Principal tells us what to do; T3. The teachers establish the culture of cooperation, not the principal.

According to the collected data the principal indicated that she models behavior and establishes expectations. Two of the teachers reported the principal as telling staff what to do or projecting her interpretation of the culture. The remaining teacher reported the culture of the school is established by the teachers.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I develop/encourage teacher leadership by encouragement to pursue administrative certificate.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. I can't say she encourages; T2. Not much leadership encouragement; T3. She requires you to be on one committee.

The data suggests the principal provides encouragement to pursue continuing education for the administrative certificate. One teacher reported the principal requires teachers to be involved on committees. Two of the teachers reported the principal does encourage leadership among the teachers.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. School leadership team makes changes to the school's vision.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. It's her vision and we align; T2. Principal tells us her vision; T3. Vision is to meet AYP.

According to the data the principal facilitates a shared vision by having the school leadership team make changes to the school vision. Two of the teachers reported the vision is the principal's vision and they align with her vision. The remaining teacher reported the vision of everyone is to meet AYP.

**Question #6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I ensure teachers' focus by examining data and other assessments.



**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal reviews data; T2. There are workshops and consultants in our rooms; T3. Principal encourages workshops.

The data indicates the principal and the 3 teachers are in agreement in that the principal has the teachers focus on ISAT improvement through the examination of data, workshops and additional personnel to work with teachers.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. Teachers are included on the school leadership team.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

T1. I'm not involved in SIP; T2. I'm not on SIP committee; T3. I'm not included in the SIP.

The data from the principal suggests the school leadership team works on the SIP. All three teachers reported they are not involved in the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I use pre-observation, observation, and post-observation for teacher evaluations.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Post observation is often missing; T2. Principal uses pre-observation, observation and post-observation; T3. Principal uses pre-observation, observation and post-observation.

According to the data the principal and two of the teachers are in agreement that the principal does follow the pre-observation, observation and post-observation for the teacher evaluation. One teacher reported the principal often does not conduct the post-observation.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I use grade level teams and pods collaborate.

**T – Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal encourages attendance at workshops; T2. We have learning communities for grade levels, workshops, and professional development; T3. Only staff meetings; no professional learning communities.

The data indicates the principal has grade level teams and pods collaborate.

All three teachers reported the principal has workshops and professional development for teachers, but one of the teachers indicated there is no professional learning community.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I employ high expectations, faculty meetings, grade level meetings, and school improvement meetings.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal employs assemblies for students; nothing for teachers; T2. Principal employs PBIS for students; not a whole lot for teachers; T3. Teachers do not feel motivated; we don't motivate the students.

The data suggest the principal has high expectations, school improvement meetings and faculty meetings to motivate teachers. All three teachers reported the principal does not provide motivation for the teachers.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All students can learn, given resources and high quality staff.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal's philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Principal believes all students can learn; T2. All can learn if you find their learning style; T3. All children can learn.

The data suggests the principal and the teachers are of one accord in that the principal does believe all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Blue Jay School, the principal has a self-perception of a democratic and shared leadership style. The other self-perceptions include involving staff and the leadership team in decision making. Two of the teachers reported the principal as having a dictatorship leadership style. One teacher reported the principal tries to please people.

All three teachers reported the principal does not include staff in decision making. One teacher reported the principal does not play a role in establishing the culture because the teachers establish the culture. The two other teachers reported the principal tells us what to do and she projects what she thinks about the culture.

Although the principal stated there is encouragement regarding teacher leadership, all three teachers held contrary views of leadership not being encouraged.

The shared vision according to the principal is facilitated through the school leadership team. The three teachers indicated the principal's vision is to make AYP. "It's her vision and we align." "She tells us her vision." These two quotes are from two of the teachers interviewed.

The principal reported the focus on continuous ISAT improvement is ensured through examination of the data and other assessments. The three teachers agree with this view and added that workshops and consultants in our rooms are also in place.

The principal reported the school leadership team has the responsibility for the development of the SIP. The three teachers indicated that they are not involved on the SIP committee.

The principal reported the teacher evaluation is conducted by using the pre-observation, observation and post-observation process. All three teachers agreed with the principal's assessment for evaluating the teachers.

The principal indicated the use of grade level teams and pod collaboration to facilitate a professional learning community. One teacher reported there were staff meetings, but no professional learning community. The remaining two teachers reported the encouragement of workshop attendance and learning communities for grade levels.

The principal expressed having high expectations, grade level meetings and school improvement meetings to motivate students and staff. The three teachers reported assemblies and PBIS for students, but nothing for teachers in regard to motivation.

The three teachers are in accordance with the perception of the principal's philosophy, all students can learn.

### **Finch School**

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your style of leadership?**

P. My style of leadership is consensus; not top-down.

#### **Question #1 – How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?**

T1. Principal's style of leadership is laissez-faire; T2. Principal's style of leadership is servant leadership; T3. Principal's style of leadership is transparent and collaborative.

According to the data from the principal, a consensus style of leadership is described. Each of the three teachers has very different perceptions ranging from transactional and servant leadership to transparent and collaborative.

**Question # 2 – Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.**

P. I get everybody's input and work on a solution.

**Question # 2 – Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.**

T1. Principal only involves certain people; T2. We have opportunities to be on committees; T3. Principal always involves me.

The data suggests the principal solicits everyone's input regarding decision making for solutions. Two teachers reported the principal provides opportunities for staff to be involved in the school decision making. One teacher reported the principal involves certain people in decision making.

**Question # 3 – What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?**

P. I model what is expected in establishing the culture.

**Question # 3 – What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?**

T1. It's big; things have to be top-down; T2. Principal makes sure everyone is on the same page; greeting the children; relying on staff to establish culture; T3. Principal creates a respectful and comfortable atmosphere.

The data indicates the principal models what is expected. Two of the teachers reported the principal creates a comfortable working atmosphere by greeting students, being respectful and relying on staff to establish the culture. The remaining teacher reported the principal has a top-down attitude regarding the establishment of the culture.

**Question # 4 – How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

P. I develop/encourage teacher leadership by asking teachers to help other teachers.

**Question # 4 – How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?**

T1. You can only do what you want in your classroom; T2. Principal encourages the mentor program; T3. Principal encourages us to chair or participate on committees.

According to the data the principal solicits teachers to help other teachers. Two of the teachers reported the principal encourages the mentor program and chairing of various committees. The remaining teacher reported the teachers can only do what they want in their classroom.

**Question # 5 – Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.**

P. I facilitate a shared vision by honest and open discussions.

**Question # 5 – Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.**

T1. Principal focuses on AYP; T2. Principal facilitates a shared vision through her transparency; T3. Principal does daily positive messages on the intercom.

The data suggest the principal has open and honest discussions with staff regarding the school vision. The teachers reported the focus on the AYP; the principal's transparency and through daily positive messages.

**Question # 6 – How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

P. I analyze data for all grades to ensure teachers' focus on continuous ISAT improvement.

**Question # 6 – How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?**

T1. Principal uses ISAT books, ISAT coach, websites, and handouts; T2. Principal uses weekly meetings, ISAT preparation, and extended responses; T3. Principal schedules time for ISAT after school.

According to the data the principal has the teacher review the data for all grades. The three teachers concur and further state the focus on ISAT books; ISAT coach; weekly meetings; and after school programs.

**Question # 7 – How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**

P. I include teachers in the development of the plan with SFA, PBIS, and continuous discussions.

**Question # 7 – How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?**



T1. We are not included; T2. We are not part of SIP committee; T3. We are included through technology.

According to the data collected, the principal has continuous discussions with staff regarding the development of the SIP. All three teachers reported they are not included in the development of the SIP.

**Question # 8 – Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

P. I use pre-observation, observation, and post-observation.

**Question # 8 – Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.**

T1. Principal's process is in the classroom once in a great while; T2. Principal uses pre-observation, observation, and post-observation; T3. Principal uses both formal and informal.

The data suggests the principal utilizes pre-observation, observation and post-observation for evaluating teachers. Two of the teachers concur with the principal's assessment of the teacher evaluation procedures. The remaining teacher reported the teacher evaluation procedure does occur, but not often.

**Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

P. I encourage grade level meetings.

**T – Question # 9 – Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?**

T1. Principal has more district-wide in-services; T2. Principal has speakers on professional development days; T3. Principal has workshops; teachers share professional development with other teachers.

The data indicates the principal encourages grade level meetings. The three teachers agree with the principal's assessment and further report having speakers on professional development days and opportunities to attend district-wide in-services.

**Question # 10 – What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

P. I am always looking to implement best practices.

**Question # 10 – What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?**

T1. Principal uses pushing the ISAT, teacher meetings, weekly ideas, handouts, and websites; T2. Principal hires fresh people; incentives for students; T3. Principal stays positive; providing encouragement for teachers and students.

According to the data the principal and the three teachers are in accord in that best practices, teachers meetings, staying positive, incentives for students and teachers, and weekly ideas help to motivate teachers and students.

**Question # 11 – What is your philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

P. All can learn at a different pace.

**Question # 11 – What is your principal’s philosophy regarding “All students can learn”?**

T1. Principal believes all students can learn; T2. Principal makes sure every child is learning; T3. All students can learn.

The data suggests the principal and the three teachers believe the principal does have a philosophy that all students can learn.

According to the data regarding the Finch School, the principal has a self-perception of a consensus builder as a leadership style. One teacher reported a transactional leadership style, another teacher stated the leadership style was a servant leadership style and the third teacher reported a transparent collaborative leadership style.

The principal indicated the need to get everyone’s input to work on solutions. Two teachers agreed that opportunities to be on committees were presented. One teacher indicated the principal only involves certain people.

The culture of the school, according to the principal is impacted by modeling for the teachers what is expected. Two of the three teachers indicated the principal creates a respectful atmosphere and makes sure everyone is on the same page. The remaining

teacher reported the top-down behavior of the principal has an impact on the school culture.

According to the principal the requesting of teachers to help other teachers helps to encourage teacher leadership. Two of the teachers reported the principal encourages teachers to participate on committees, chair committees and be part of the mentor program. One teacher stated teachers can only do what they want to do in their individual classroom.

The shared vision is promoted through honest and open discussions according to the principal. The three teachers expressed multiple views regarding how the vision is shared by the principal: focus on AYP; facilitates vision through transparency and delivers daily positive messages via the school intercom.

According to the principal the data for ISAT improvement is analyzed for all grades. The three teachers concur with this assessment and add the following: ISAT books; coach; weekly meetings; ISAT preparation; and after-school programs are used to improve ISAT scores.

The principal reported the use of SFA, PBIS and continuous discussions regarding the development of the SIP. Two of the teachers indicated they were not included in the development of the SIP. One teacher stated her limited involvement through technology.

The principal and two of the three teachers were in agreement that the principal evaluated the teachers using the process of pre-observation, observation and post-observation procedures.

There was consensus among the three teachers regarding the principal's perception of encouraging grade level meetings, having workshops and sharing professional development knowledge with each other to facilitate a professional learning community.

There was also consensus among the three teachers regarding the principal's practice of motivating staff via implementation of best practices, incentives for students, staying positive and having teacher meetings.

There was agreement regarding the principal's belief that all students can learn.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ANALYSIS OF DATA AND COLLECTION**

#### **Overview of Research Project**

The purpose of this study was to compare and contrast leadership styles in 10 high poverty south suburban elementary schools: five schools that achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) and five schools that did not achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

The researcher interviewed one principal and three teachers from each of the 10 elementary schools. A total of 10 principals and 30 teachers were interviewed.

Principals were interviewed at their respective schools at a time that was convenient.

Teachers were interviewed at a time that was also convenient, but at local public libraries in an effort to maintain their anonymity.

All interviews were transcribed and participant responses were analyzed for common and contrasting perceptions related to styles of leadership. Perceptions were further analyzed to ascertain any alignment with the three styles of leadership as defined by the following:

#### **Style A**

Autocratic leaders closely monitors the teacher and the teacher's performance; fosters competition between staff; rewards success and punishes poor performance. The autocratic leader is also directive and task-oriented (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939).

Bureaucratic leaders advocate a strong division between management (thinkers) and labor (doers). There is a clear delineation of authority. Also, workers need to be directed (Taylor, 1911).

Bureaucratic leaders view teachers as subordinates in a hierarchically arranged system. Hierarchy equals expertise and trustworthiness. Teachers are not to be trusted and the goals and interests of teachers and supervisors are not the same. These leaders closely monitor teachers to ensure compliance (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Level 3 leaders organize people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of pre-determined objectives (Collins, 2001).

### **Style B**

Transactional leaders exchange things of value with subordinates to advance their own and their subordinates' agendas (Kuhnert, 1994).

Transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates to do what the leaders want (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987).

Psychological leaders barter with teachers so each side gets what it wants. Teachers comply with requirements and rules when rewards are available. When the teachers' needs are met, the work gets done (Sergiovanni, 1992).

### **Style C**

Transformational leaders are concerned with improving the performance of followers and developing followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990a).

Transformational leaders exhibit a strong set of internal values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Kuhnert, 1994).

Level 5 leaders channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal of building a great organization. These leaders are ambitious first and foremost for the institution, not themselves. These leaders rely principally on inspired standards, not charisma to motivate. Lastly, these leaders demonstrate an unwavering resolve to do whatever is necessary to produce the best long-term results (Collins, 2001).

Moral leaders identify and make explicit the values and beliefs that define the center of school as a community. These leaders promote collegiality and rely on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations. There is also a reliance on the school community's informal norms to enforce professional and community values (Sergiovanni, 1992).

Servant leaders subjugate their egoistic needs to the greater ambition of building something larger and more lasting than themselves (Collins, 2001).

Servant leaders refer to those who bring a leader moral distinction of conscious sacrificial service to meet the needs of individual followers (Greenleaf, 1977).

### **Style D**

Situational leaders maintain that managers use different leadership styles depending on the situation. Depending on the employees' competencies in their task areas and commitment to their tasks, the leadership style should vary from one person to another (Hersey & Blanchard, 1968).



Contingency leadership is based on the personality of the leader and the degree of stability or uncertainty of the situation (Fiedler, 1967; 1974).

Specific to this study, the three research questions are as follows:

1. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
2. What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that do not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?
3. Does a type of leadership style exist among five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years that is different from the type of leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth).

#### **Analysis of Responses at Schools that Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

Based on the data obtained from the participants in this study, the following information was suggested relative to the first research question.

#### **Research Question # 1**

What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?

Participants at the Apple School were divided regarding the perceptions of the principal's leadership style. Two of the teachers' responses suggested the principal was a top-down leader. This would be consistent with the leadership characteristics identified in Style A. However, the principal and the remaining teacher reported perceptions of the leadership style of the principal as being more situational. Fiedler (1974) would indicate the situation at-hand best determines the style of leadership to be implemented. This would place this type of leadership in Style D.

All participants at the Orange School reported the principal as having both a situational (Style D) and cooperative style of leadership. The cooperative style of leadership is closely related to the leadership characteristics identified in Style C. The terms "collegiality" used by Sergiovanni (1992) and "service to meet the needs of followers" by Greenleaf (1977) seem to be aligned with a cooperative style of leadership.

Participants at the Grape School provided very contrasting perceptions from the principal's self-perception. The principal reported a self-perception of possessing a democratic leadership style. All three teachers indicated the principal demonstrates a dictatorship style of leadership similar to the characteristics listed in Style A. This would suggest the principal views teachers as subordinates; they are not to be trusted; and they must be monitored to ensure compliance according to Sergiovanni (1992).

Each of the participants at the Pear School reported the leadership style of the principal as being a collaborative style of leadership. This style of leadership is most closely indicative of the characteristics of leadership styles listed in Style C. More

specifically, according to the findings of Hallinger and Heck (2010), collaborative school leadership positively impacts student learning through collective leadership practices.

The participants of the Cherry School reported very different perceptions of the principal's style of leadership. The principal's self perception was one as being a situational leader which is indicative of Fiedler's (1974) theory of situational leadership which is Style D.

One of the three teachers reported the principal as having a collaborative style of leadership which aligns with Style C. The remaining two teachers provided perceptions of the principal's leadership style as being autocratic. According to Lewin et al. (1939), this style of leadership is aligned with the characteristics listed in Style A.

### **Analysis of Responses at Schools that Did Not Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

Based on the data obtained from the participants in this study, the following information was suggested relative to the second research question.

#### **Research Question # 2**

What is the perception of principals and select teachers of the leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that did not achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years?

All of the participants at the Robin School reported perceptions of the principal having a collaborative style of leadership. Perceptions included the principal fostering

shared decision-making, clear expectations, nurturing and encouraging teacher leadership. These perceptions are closely aligned with the characteristics in Style C.

Participants at the Dove School provided very different perceptions of the principal's style of leadership. The principal's self-perception was that of both a collaborative leadership style and a top-down leadership style. These two styles respectively refer to Style C and Style A.

The three teachers at the Dove School offered three different perceptions. One teacher's perception of the principal's leadership style was that of lax and laissez-faire. Lewin et al. (1939) stated groups lead by the laissez-faire leader produce the least and worst products due to the group leading itself. The second teacher reported a laid back principal who is proactive when necessary. This seems to suggest a directive approach to leadership which is a Style A type of leader when necessary. The remaining teacher indicated a perception of a strong principal who delegates well. This could possibly suggest a collaborative style of leadership consistent with characteristics listed in Style C.

Each of the participants at the Cardinal School reported perceptions of the principal having a transformational style of leadership. It was stated the principal facilitates a shared vision, provides positive reinforcement, motivates faculty to behave in ways that support the mission of the school and ensures the school vision is visible to everyone. This style of leadership is most consistent with the characteristics in Style C. According to Kuhnert (1994), transformational leaders exhibit a strong set of values and are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own interest.

The participants at the Blue Jay School reported contrasting perceptions of the principal's leadership style. The principal's self-perception was one of a democratic and shared leadership style. A democratic leadership style is more closely aligned with Style C. Two of the teachers reported the principal as having a dictatorship style of leadership. Both teachers elaborated that the principal does not include staff in decision making and tells staff what to do. According to Taylor (1911), Sergiovanni (1994) and Lewin et al. (1911), this type of leadership is very directive and teachers are closely monitored to ensure compliance. This strongly suggests a leadership style consistent with the characteristics in Style A. The remaining teacher's perception of the leadership style of the principal was that of trying to please everyone. This could be interpreted as a perception that reflects a laissez-faire type of leadership style.

The principal at the Finch School indicated a self-perception of being a consensus builder. Collins (2001) makes reference to building a great organization through relying on inspired standards and channeling the ego needs of the leader away from themselves and into the larger organization. Sergiovanni (1992) points out that leaders promote collegiality and rely on the ability of community members to respond to duties and obligations. This style of leadership is closely associated with the characteristics in Style C.

The three teachers at the Finch School reported respectively their perceptions of the principal's leadership style as being a transactional leadership style, a servant leadership style and a transparent collaborative leadership style. The transactional style of leadership is more aligned with the characteristics in Style B. According to Kuhnert

and Lewis (1987), transactional leaders are influential because it is in the best interest of subordinates to do what the leaders wants. Sergiovanni (1992) points out that teachers working under psychological leaders comply with requirements and rules when rewards are available. Essentially, when the teachers' needs are met, the work gets done. The servant leadership style and the transparent collaborative style are both consistent with the characteristics in Style C. Greenleaf (1977) views servant leadership as a leader who make sacrificial service to meet the needs of the followers.

**Differences Between Schools that Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)  
and Schools that Did Not Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**

**Research Question # 3**

Does a type of leadership style exist among five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade) that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for three consecutive years that is different from the type of leadership style of five principals at low SES area elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth).

Figure 13 represents the coding of the perceptions of leadership styles of the principals and the three teachers from each of the five schools that achieved AYP.

Apple School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style D	Style D	Style A	Style A
Orange School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style D	Style C	Style C	Style C
Grape	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style A	Style A	Style A
Pear School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style C	Style C	Style C
Cherry School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style D	Style C	Style A	Style A

Figure 13. Perceptions of Participants at Schools that Achieved AYP

Figure 14 represents the coding of the perceptions of the leadership styles of the principals and the three teachers from each of the five schools that did not achieve AYP.

Robin School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style C	Style C	Style C
Dove School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Styles A & C	Laissez-Faire	Style A	Style A
Cardinal School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style C	Style C	Style C
Blue Jay School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style A	Style A	Laissez-Faire
Finch School	Principal	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
	Style C	Style B	Style C	Style C

Figure 14. Perceptions of Participants at Schools that Did Not Achieve AYP

According to the data, three of the principals from the five schools that achieved AYP perceived their leadership styles as being situational while the other two principals had self-perceptions of more of a collaborative transformational leadership style. Despite the wording, situational leadership implies a style of leadership that can shift between styles in order to address the issues or task. All five of the principals at the schools that did not achieve AYP had self-perceptions of a collaborative transformational style of leadership. One of the five principals clearly acknowledged having a top-down style of leadership in addition to the collaborative transformational leadership style. This suggests the leadership style is situational.



There are more similarities than differences between the self-perceptions of principals at schools that achieved AYP and schools that did not achieve AYP.

Kouzes and Posner (2002) point out it takes a collaborative effort with staff to develop the vision, set goals, plan and deliver instruction, and evaluate the process continuously. All 10 of the principals provided responses that were consistent with the aforementioned practices. Additionally, all 10 principals included self-perceptions that involved creating opportunities for competencies to be acquired by their respective staff.

The leadership dimension that is closely related to positive student outcomes is that of promoting and participating in teacher learning and development according to Robinson et al. (2008). This seems evident regarding the 10 principals in this study who have similar self-perceptions regarding their style of leadership, but differ greatly regarding the achievement of AYP.

Teachers from the schools that achieved AYP yielded seven perceptions of the principal having a top-down, autocratic style of leadership. Two of the seven teachers are located at the Apple School, three of the teachers are located at the Grape School and two of the teachers are at the Cherry School.

Only four teachers from the schools that did not achieve AYP reported their respective principals as having a top-down, autocratic style leadership. It's interesting to note here that two of the teachers are located at the Dove School and the other two teachers are located at the Blue Jay School. This is significant due to fact that more than one person at the same school had a similar perception of the principal.

According to Davis et al. (2005), leaders adapt their leadership to address the context-specific needs of teachers, students and other stakeholders. This seems to suggest that leadership characteristics are flexible and dependent on multiple variables.

Some teachers from both sets of schools reported top-down leadership, but contrary to other research the collaborative model of leadership is not the perception of the majority of teachers in schools that achieved AYP. For purposes of this study, the top-down model of leadership is perceived by more teachers to be used most often in the schools that achieved AYP. The range of differences for teacher perceived top-down leadership styles at schools that achieved AYP is seven teachers out of 15 teachers, while teacher perceptions of top-down leadership styles at schools that did not achieve AYP is four teachers out of 15 teachers. Additionally, the principals at the schools that achieved AYP had more self-perceptions of having a situational leadership style than the principals at the schools that did not achieve AYP.

It could be implied here that one size does not fit all and leadership characteristics are not based on a singular model of leadership. Also, when assessing the needs of staff it is essential to know their strengths and weaknesses. Obviously the assignment of duties and expectations of faculty is predicated on how well the leader is able to identify levels of commitment, ability, maturity, and disposition of individual faculty. All of these aforementioned factors seem to contribute to the style of leadership employed by a school principal.

## **Conclusions**

Research has demonstrated that leadership is shared through collaboration and communication with all staff. Stigler and Hiebert (1999) state teachers who use their knowledge to solve school problems collaboratively tend to be particularly satisfied with and committed to their jobs. Teachers who work collaboratively with peers, administrators, parents and community members are better able to transform practice and thereby improve both their professional practice and student learning.

As mentioned earlier in this study, Danielson (2002) indicates that school leadership requires the capability to develop, communicate, and put in place a vision for school improvement that marshals the energies of disparate members of a staff around common goals. Visionary leadership enables staff members to regard the most mundane aspects of their roles in light of their relation to prompting student learning. Although largely considered the province of the administration, leadership may be exercised by anyone in the school.

It is imperative that the school principal proceed forward based on his/her assessment of the faculty. The one-size-fit-all model of leadership has little relevance or significance when working with a myriad of people. School leadership has to be tailored to meet the characteristics of the individual followers and their respective school environment. This statement does not implicitly or explicitly mean the earlier mentioned practices should be abandoned. However, it does mean school leadership should reflect an adaptation of behaviors and practices that are best aligned with achieving the

necessary professional growth of teachers and academic achievement of students in high poverty schools.

According to Lyman and Villani (2004), Taylor, Pearson, Clark and Walpole (2000), promoting high standards, excellent teaching and strong leadership characterize high poverty schools which have been successfully. The factor of reported strong leadership seems most evident in the five schools that achieved AYP as compared to the five schools that did not achieve AYP.

Reeves (2000) states that principals should make decisive moves in teacher assignments, such as reassigning teachers to different grades within the same school; principals should facilitate the use of common assessments and have teachers quickly provide feedback to help improve student performance; and focus on student data from multiple sources with teachers comparing students to themselves rather than to other students.

Clearly there are strategies and professional practices that are useful in moving toward developing and maintaining high achieving students in high poverty schools.

This study suggests the five principals at the schools that achieved AYP utilized flexibility regarding their leadership styles. Whether the leadership was situational or contingency based, the principals seemed to be familiar enough with their respective faculty to understand what leadership style was most effective in achieving the desired outcome of continuous student achievement.

Based on the evidence presented from the schools that did not achieve AYP, the leadership practices might be more effective in facilitating the achievement of AYP if the

style of leadership was more situational and contingent on the structure of the task and the competencies and maturity level of the teachers.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

It is important to note the interview questions were based on best practices cited throughout this study regarding effective leadership. Each question could actually be the source of another research study. However, for purposes of this research study the interview questions were designed solely to elicit responses that would provide the researcher with a better understanding of the perceptions of the leadership style of each principal.

Further research regarding the Johari Window (Sources of Light, 2009) and its potential impact on the practice of school leadership has considerable value. Self-reflection is a worthwhile endeavor because “blind spots” exist for all of us, but an external set of eyes could provide us with an additional awareness of how principals are perceived and understood by others.

The need for additional research regarding the importance of professional development and mentoring for principals is a worthy endeavor. Principals and school districts often require professional development and mentoring for teachers. The impact of required professional development and mentoring that is specific to principals seems essential for their professional growth. Also, knowing the principal is engaged in professional improvement sends a message to the other staff regarding the significance of continuous learning for everyone in the school.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study include the obvious lack of input from students, parents and a more significant amount of teachers regarding the leadership style of the principals. The perceptions of teachers may have been influenced by other variables such as recent teacher rating or assignment of duties. These factors cannot be controlled by the researcher at any given time due to the nature of people and the qualitative method of conducting research.

As stated in the chapter on methodology, the findings in this study cannot be generalized to another school setting due to the small sample size of schools, principals and teachers.

An additional factor that could be considered a limitation is the extent to which teachers and principals perceive the leadership construct in the same way.

Cambron-McCabe and Cunningham (2002) make the point of the key question that must be addressed is about the meaning of leading in today's schools. Schools depend on leadership in order to shape productive futures through self-renewal (Marks & Printy, 2003). However, as Shen (2001) argued, "To make teachers' and principals' perceptions congruent is a daunting task facing us in this era of school leadership." When schools have the benefit of integrated leadership, the quality of pedagogy and the achievement of students improve (Marks & Printy, 2003).

APPENDIX A  
PRINCIPAL'S INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Principal's Interview Protocol**

1. How would you describe your style of leadership?
2. Describe how you involve your teachers in school decision making.
3. What role do you play in establishing the culture of your school?
4. How do you develop/encourage teacher leadership?
5. Describe how you have facilitated a shared vision.
6. How do you ensure your teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?
7. How have you included your teachers in the development of the School Improvement Plan?
8. Explain your process for conducting teacher evaluations.
9. Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways have you facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?
10. What practices do you employ to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?
11. What is your philosophy regarding "All students can learn"?



APPENDIX B

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### **Teacher's Interview Protocol**

1. How would you describe your principal's style of leadership?
2. Describe how the principal involves you in school decision making.
3. What role does the principal play in establishing the culture of your school?
4. How does your principal develop/encourage teacher leadership?
5. Describe how your principal has facilitated a shared vision.
6. How has the principal ensured that teachers focus on continuous ISAT improvement?
7. How has your principal included you in the development of the School Improvement Plan?
8. Explain the principal's process for conducting teacher evaluations.
9. Professional learning communities requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. In what ways has the principal facilitated professional learning community practices in your school?
10. What practices has the principal employed to ensure the school environment is one that continuously motivates teachers and students to improve?
11. What is your principal's philosophy regarding "All students can learn"?

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF COOPERATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(SUPERINTENDENTS)

**Letter of Cooperation to Participate in Research**  
(Superintendents)

**Project Title:** Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools

**Researcher:** John W. Cook

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Janis Fine

**Introduction:**

You are being asked for your permission to allow a research study being conducted by John W. Cook (708-748-6462) for a *dissertation* under the supervision of Dr. Janis Fine (312-915-7022) in the Department of Administration and Supervision at Loyola University of Chicago.

**Purpose:**

This study will examine the perceived leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools (kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years is not achieved.

To ensure a degree of continuity, participating principals will need to be the principal in their present building level position for at least 2 consecutive years.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to this study, one principal and three teachers from at least one of the schools in your school district will be asked to participate in a private interview that will be audio-taped with their permission. The interview will be conducted at a time, date, and location that is convenient for the principal and teachers and not during school hours. The type of questions asked of the principal will be aimed at obtaining self-perceptions of his/her leadership characteristics. The type of questions asked of the teachers will be aimed at obtaining their perceptions of the leadership style of their respective principal. The interview should last between 60 to 90 minutes per participant. If you decide to allow this study, the principals in your (kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) schools will

receive recruitment letters. Upon receipt of the principal's decision to participate, each teacher will receive a recruitment letter in their respective school mailbox along with a consent form. Following the agreement to participate each participant will sign a letter of consent in my presence. Additionally, only the first 3 teachers who respond will be permitted to participate.

If you agree to this study, you will be asked to:

Sign and return this "Letter of Cooperation." Please copy this "Letter of Cooperation" onto your personal stationery. Please sign the form and return it to the researcher in the enclosed stamped, self-addressed envelope. Signing and returning this "Letter of Cooperation" will indicate your agreement to allow the researcher to recruit principals and teachers from your school district to participate in this research study.

**Confidentiality:**

The identity of the 3 participating teachers will not be disclosed to anyone to ensure confidentiality. All responses will remain confidential and the names of school districts will not be mentioned in the final writing

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

John W. Cook at [cook17624@aol.com](mailto:cook17624@aol.com)

Dr. Janis Fine at [jfine@luc.edu](mailto:jfine@luc.edu)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research at (773) 508-2689.

**Statement of Cooperation:**

I, the Superintendent, agree to cooperate in the research to be conducted by John W. Cook, a Loyola Doctoral Student. His project entitled "*Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools*" along with the outlined research protocols is understood.

---

**Superintendent's Signature**

---

**Date**

---

**Researcher's Signature**

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF RECRUITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(PRINCIPALS)

**Letter of Recruitment to Participate in Research**  
(Principals)

**Project Title:** Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools.

**Researcher:** John W. Cook

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Janis Fine

**Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted by John W. Cook (708-748-6462) for a *dissertation* under the supervision of Dr. Janis Fine (312-915-7022) in the Department of Administration and Supervision at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because you are a principal in an elementary school (kindergarten through eighth grade) that has a large student population living in high poverty. To ensure a degree of continuity, participating principals will need to be the principal in their present building level position for at least 2 consecutive years.

**Purpose:**

This study will examine the perceived leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years is not achieve.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to allow me to conduct a private interview with you that will be audio-taped with your permission. The interview will be conducted at a time, date, and location that is convenient for you. The type of questions asked of the principal will be aimed at obtaining self-perceptions of the leadership characteristics of the principal from the perspective of the principal. The interview should last between 60 to 90 minutes per participant.

**Confidentiality:**

If you decide to participate, all of the teachers in your school will receive recruitment letters, but only the first 3 teachers who respond will be permitted to participate. The identity of the 3 participating teachers will not be disclosed to anyone to ensure confidentiality. All responses will remain confidential.

All interested participants may contact me to discuss an interview time. A consent form is enclosed for your review.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

John W. Cook at [cook17624@aol.com](mailto:cook17624@aol.com)

Dr. Janis Fine at [jfine@luc.edu](mailto:jfine@luc.edu)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research at (773) 508-2689.

Sincerely,

John W. Cook



APPENDIX E

LETTER OF RECRUITMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(TEACHERS)

**Letter of Recruitment to Participate in Research**  
(Teachers)

**Project Title:** Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools.

**Researcher:** John W. Cook

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Janis Fine

**Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted by John W. Cook (708-748-6462) for a *dissertation* under the supervision of Dr. Janis Fine (312-915-7022) in the Department of Administration and Supervision at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because you are a teacher in an elementary school that has a large student population living in high poverty. The projected amount of elementary schools that will comprise this study is ten elementary schools; one principal from each school; and three teachers from each school.

**Purpose:**

This study will examine the perceived leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years is not achieved

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to allow me to conduct a private interview with you that will be audio-taped with your permission. The interview will be conducted at a time, date, and location that is convenient for you. The type of questions asked of the teacher will be aimed at obtaining perceptions of the leadership characteristics of the principal from your perspective. The interviews should last between 60 to 90 minutes per participant and will not be during school hours or on school property.

**Confidentiality:**

All of the teachers in your school will receive recruitment letters and letters of consent, but only the first 3 teachers who respond will be permitted to participate. The identity of the 3 participating teachers will not be disclosed to anyone to ensure confidentiality. All responses will remain confidential.

All interested participants may contact me to discuss an interview time. A consent form is enclosed for your review.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

John W. Cook at [cook17624@aol.com](mailto:cook17624@aol.com)

Dr. Janis Fine at [jfine@luc.edu](mailto:jfine@luc.edu)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research at (773) 508-2689.

Sincerely,

John W. Cook

APPENDIX F

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(PRINCIPALS)

**Letter of Informed Consent to Participate in Research**  
(Principals)

**Project Title:** Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools

**Researcher(s):** John W. Cook

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Janis Fine

**Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted by John W. Cook, for a *dissertation* under the supervision of Dr. Janis Fine in the Department of Administration and Supervision at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because you are a principal in an elementary school that has a large student population living in high poverty. To ensure a degree of continuity, participating principals will need to be the principal in their present building level position for at least 2 consecutive years.

The projected amount of elementary schools that will comprise this study is ten elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade); one principal from each school; and three teachers from each school. The total number of participants will be ten principals and thirty teachers.

*Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in the study.*

**Purpose:**

This study will examine the perceived leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years is not achieved.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to allow me to conduct a private interview with you that will be audio-taped. The interview will be conducted at a time, date, and location that is convenient for you. The type of questions asked of the principal and teachers will be aimed at obtaining self-perceptions and external perceptions of the leadership characteristics of the principal from the perspective of the principal and three teachers. The interviews will be audio-taped and should last between 60 to 90 minutes per participant.

**Risks/Benefits:**

There are minimal risks involved in participating in this research. All audio tapes and written transcriptions will never be shared with any individual and all identifying markers will be removed in the final dissertation.

There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but information gathered from the findings in this research study will assist school boards in assessing potential principals and evaluating current principals regarding effective leadership styles in challenging schools. Principal preparatory programs could modify their curriculum aimed at developing and improving specific leadership skills in challenging schools. Additionally, it is hoped this study will add to the body of research in educational leadership

**Compensation:**

Participants who are selected and interviewed will receive \$25 dollars from the researcher upon completion of the interview for their participation in the research study. Participants who choose to withdraw early from participating and end the interview early will be given full compensation.

**Costs:**

There are **no** costs to the participants for their involvement in this research study.

**Alternatives:**

This research study does **not** involve an intervention or diagnostic procedure.

**Confidentiality:**

The identity of participants in this study will not be revealed and your responses will be kept confidential. In the report of this study, a pseudonym will be assigned to you and your school in order to protect your privacy. The use of an audio-tape will be used during the interview for purposes of accuracy and later transcription. Audio recordings will be labeled by participant's pseudonym assignment. Audio recordings will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. All audio recordings, transcribed audio recordings, consent forms, and field notes will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

John W. Cook at [cook17624@aol.com](mailto:cook17624@aol.com)

Dr. Janis Fine at [jfine@luc.edu](mailto:jfine@luc.edu)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research at (773) 508-2689.

**Statement of Consent:**

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

---

**Participant's Signature**

---

**Date**

---

**Researcher's Signature**

---

**Date**

APPENDIX G

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

(TEACHERS)



**Letter of Informed Consent to Participate in Research**  
(Teachers)

**Project Title:** Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools

**Researcher(s):** John W. Cook

**Faculty Sponsor:** Dr. Janis Fine

**Introduction:**

You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted by John W. Cook, for a *dissertation* under the supervision of Dr. Janis Fine in the Department of Administration and Supervision at Loyola University of Chicago.

You are being asked to participate because you are a teacher in an elementary school that has a large student population living in high poverty. The projected amount of elementary schools that will comprise this study is ten elementary schools (kindergarten through eighth grade); one principal from each school; and three teachers from each school. The total number of participants will be ten principals and thirty teachers.

*Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in the study.*

**Purpose:**

This study will examine the perceived leadership styles of ten principals who work in elementary schools which have been identified through their state report cards as having a majority student population living in poverty. More specifically, this study will examine the leadership styles of five of the ten schools that have achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years and five schools that have not achieved adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years as measured by state standardized tests. The goal of this study is determine if there is a difference in leadership styles in high poverty schools that achieve adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years compared to leadership styles in high poverty schools where adequate yearly progress overall for 3 consecutive years is not achieved.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to allow me to conduct a private interview with you that will be audio-taped. The interview will be conducted at a time, date, and location that is convenient for you. The type of questions asked of the principal

and teachers will be aimed at obtaining self-perceptions and external perceptions of the leadership characteristics of the principal from the perspective of the principal and three teachers. The interviews will be audio-taped and should last between 60 to 90 minutes per participant.

**Risks/Benefits:**

There are minimal risks involved in participating in this research. The interview questions may be considered controversial in that they ask the research study participants to discuss their perceptions of the leadership style of their respective principal. Considerable precautions will be undertaken to ensure your confidentiality as a research study participant. All audio tapes and written transcriptions will never be shared with any individual and all identifying markers will be removed in the final dissertation.

There are no direct benefits to you from participation, but information gathered from the findings in this research study will assist school boards in assessing potential principals and evaluating current principals regarding effective leadership styles in challenging schools. Principal preparatory programs could modify their curriculum aimed at developing and improving specific leadership skills in challenging schools. Additionally, it is hoped this study will add to the body of research in educational leadership.

**Compensation:**

Participants who are selected and interviewed will receive \$25 dollars from the researcher upon completion of the interview for their participation in the research study. Participants who choose to withdraw early from participating and end the interview early will be given full compensation.

**Costs:**

There are **no** costs to the participants for their involvement in this research study.

**Alternatives:**

This research study does **not** involve an intervention or diagnostic procedure

**Confidentiality:**

The identity of participants in this study will not be revealed and your responses will be kept confidential. In the report of this study, a pseudonym will be assigned to you and your school in order to protect your privacy. The use of an audio-tape will be used during the interview for purposes of accuracy and later transcription. Audio recordings will be labeled by participant's pseudonym assignment. Audio recordings will be stored

in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. All audio recordings, transcribed audio recordings, consent forms, and field notes will be destroyed two years after the research has been completed.

**Voluntary Participation:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.

**Contacts and Questions:**

If you have questions about this research study, please contact:

John W. Cook at [cook17624@aol.com](mailto:cook17624@aol.com)

Dr. Janis Fine at [jfine@luc.edu](mailto:jfine@luc.edu)

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Compliance Manager in Loyola's Office of Research at (773) 508-2689.

**Statement of Consent:**

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

---

**Participant's Signature**

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**Date**

---

**Researcher's Signature**

---

**Date**

APPENDIX H  
TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

**Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to transcribe the interviews for  
(Printed Name)

doctoral research of John W. Cook entitled “Examining Leadership Styles in Ten High Poverty Elementary Schools.” I will maintain strict confidentiality of the audio recordings and the transcriptions. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

I will not discuss the data with anyone but the researcher.

I will not share copies with anyone except the researcher.

I agree to return all copies of the audio recordings and transcriptions to the researcher at conclusion of the contract.

I have read and understood the information provided above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Transcriber’s Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Researcher’s Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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